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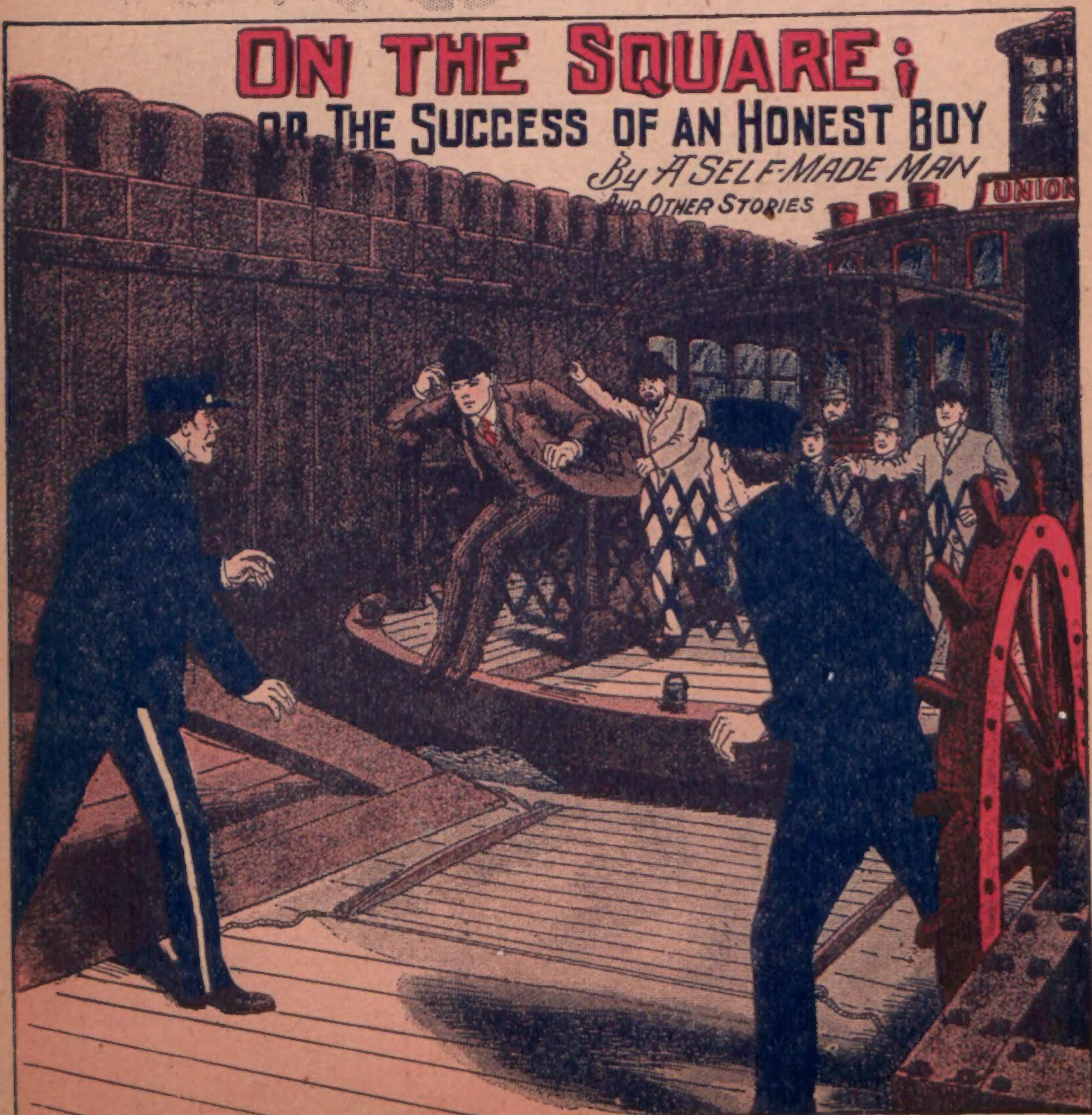
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# FAME & FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF  
BOYS THAT MAKE MONEY.

## ON THE SQUARE; OR THE SUCCESS OF AN HONEST BOY

By A SELF-MADE MAN  
AND OTHER STORIES



Silas Cobb, cane upraised, followed in full chase. The boat had already started out of the slip, but Bob, measuring the intervening space with his eye, took a flying leap and landed safely with both feet on the dock.



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# **FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY**

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NEW YORK, JUNE 6, 1924

Price 8 Cents.

## **ON THE SQUARE**

**OR, THE SUCCESS OF AN HONEST BOY**

By **A SELF-MADE MAN**

### **CHAPTER I.—Bob Keane's Ambition.**

"I wish I had two hundred dollars," said Bob Keane, wistfully, as he and his cousin, Morris Cobb, stood looking at the following announcement posted up side by side with various vendue notices on the bulletin board in the Newtown postoffice:

"For Sale—On account of the death of William Hazen, all the good will and fixtures (consisting of one two-year-old-sorrel horse, known as Jim Dandy; one set of harness in fair condition, and one four-wheeled wagon in good order) of the Hazen Express Route. Price, \$200. The same may be seen at any time by calling on Mrs. William Hazen, Bloomfield.

"What do you want two hundred dollars for?" asked Morris, regarding his companion in some surprise.

"I'd buy out Hazen's Express Route," replied Bob, promptly.

"Ho!" exclaimed Morris Cobb, contemptuously. "What would you do with Hazen's Express Route?"

"I'd run it and make money."

"I guess you're crazy. I've heard Hazen couldn't make the thing pan out, so how could you expect to do anything with it, even if my father would let you take hold of it, which he wouldn't, I know."

"The reason Hazen didn't make a success out of the route was because he preferred to put in most of his time at the barroom down at the tavern instead of attending to business. He neglected his customers, and put them to all kinds of inconvenience, so that they often had to go clear to Bloomfield themselves to get their stuff. I wouldn't do business that way if I owned the route. I don't think Uncle Silas would stop me from earning a little money on my own hook. I need it badly enough. He hasn't any claim on my time, anyway."

"My father is your guardian, isn't he?" said Morris.

"Suppose he is. He doesn't treat me any too well. Look at my clothes. Is this a decent suit for a boy with \$10,000 to be obliged to go around town in?"

"You've got a better one. Why don't you wear that?"

"I've got a Sunday suit, yes. And your mother wouldn't get over the shock for a month if she saw that on me any week-day except it was a legal holiday. She'd simply make Rome howl, and Uncle Silas would back her up, too. I tell you, Morris, I'm tired of the way things are, and I'm going to make a change if I can."

"Well, supposing you did start into the express business, it wouldn't do you any good. If you made any money father would take it away from you."

"Well, if I make any money by my own efforts you can bet he won't get hold of a cent of it."

"How are you going to help yourself?"

"That's my business. I've worked like a slave for Uncle Silas for a good many years—ever since father died, eight years ago—and what have I got for it, and for the five dollars a week he gets for my keep? I've got nothing but the short end of everything. Well, I'm sick of it. I'm sixteen now, and I'm going to stand out for a square deal. I'm willing to do the right thing by Uncle Silas if he'll do the same by me. I'd have no objection to letting him keep any money I'd make if he'd guarantee to clothe me right, feed me properly, and not interfere with my business arrangements. But I'm afraid it isn't in him to do that. I've lived eight years in your family, and I've got your father down pretty fine. I'm sorry to say, Morris, that I couldn't take his word to treat me the way I want to be treated, because I'm dead sure he wouldn't do it. Your father is too old to change his ways now. What's bred in the bone comes out in the flesh. Your father can't change his disposition no more than a leopard can his spots. So that's all there is to it."

Bob Keane thrust his hands down deep into the pockets of his shabby trousers and strode out of the general store and post-office. His cousin Morris followed him as far as the door, and while Bob continued on up the street he took possession of one of the chairs on the broad veranda, where the village loungers congregated at times and, drawing a pack of cigarettes from his pocket, selected one, lit it and proceeded to enjoy himself after the lazy fashion that was habitual with him.

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There was a mighty difference between those two boys. Bob was strong, good-looking and endowed with lots of energy and ambition; Morris was thin, with little real stamina, sallow-complexioned, and handicapped with a constitutional aversion for anything that looked like work.

Silas Cobb, the uncle and guardian of the one and father of the other, was a man of economical principles, to put it in a mild way. The villagers said he was mean and penurious—in fact, he was hated and despised by his neighbors and acquaintances. When Edward Keane, Bob's father, died suddenly eight years before, leaving property worth, after his debts had been paid, \$10,000, and a motherless boy, the probate court favorably considered the application of Silas Cobb, his brother-in-law to be made the orphan's guardian. Silas obtained control of both the property and the boys, got an allowance of \$5 a week for the lad's support, and then proceeded to squeeze as much profit out of the transaction as it was possible for him to do. As long as Bob's real aunt lived she saw to it that her nephew was well-treated: but she died a year after Bob became an inmate of Mr. Cobb's home, and a year later Silas married an old maid, worth a little money, and almost as parsimonious as Silas Cobb himself, and thenceforward Bob found his path hard and thorny, and even Morris, the old man's son, found a big difference in things in general, against which he put up many a strenuous but not always effectual kick.

Although Bob Keane had nothing particular on his hands that morning, he did not stroll up the street in the easy, careless fashion that most boys would have assumed under the circumstances. On the contrary, he walked smartly along the tree-shaded Main street, with his head erect and his eyes bent straight before him. Everybody in Newtown knew Bob, and not one but liked the cheery-faced boy, and was glad to exchange a word or two with him.

As Bob walked up the street his mind was full of visions of what he thought he would be able to accomplish if he could buy out Hazen's Express Route.

## CHAPTER II.—A Thrilling Rescue.

Newtown was a good-sized village in Ulster County, New York State. It was situated perhaps a mile south of the trolley road which runs between Highland, on the Hudson River opposite Poughkeepsie, and New Palz, on the Walkyll Valley Railroad. Many of the villagers and farmers in the neighborhood added to their income by taking boarders in the summer. As our story opens in the early part of June, there were already a number of city people at the different houses. Among these was a wealthy New York merchant named William Fairchild and his daughter Fanny, a charming little miss of fourteen. They were stopping at the home of a well-to-do farmer who lived about a mile outside of Newtown.

Fanny Fairchild, being an only motherless daughter, was an especial pet of her father, who lavished on her everything that her heart wished for. When Fanny got settled at Farmer Jordan's she was delighted to find that there was a beautiful though rather high-spirited little mare on

the farm, and she insisted on using her upon the road when she could persuade her father to accompany her as an escort, for she was not permitted to go out alone.

On the day that Bob Keane read the "For Sale" notice of Hazen's Express Route at the village post-office, Fanny Fairchild and her father started out on a morning ride along the county road. They had gone perhaps a quarter of a mile from the farm-house, in the direction of the village, when a big touring automobile came bowling along behind them. The chauffeur let off a weird and ear-piercing shriek as a warning to them that he expected undisputed right-of-way, for the machine was humming along at a thirty-mile-an-hour clip. The mare and the gelding were both thoroughly startled by the outlandish toot, and their fright was magnified by the rush of the red machine as it whizzed by them like an arrow from a bow.

Both animals rose on their haunches, and, while the horse backed up against the fence, the little mare, with a snort of terror, dashed off down the road toward Newtown at a pace that would have made the famous Tam o'Shanter look like thirty cents. Fanny was now placed in a situation of great peril, because the bridle-reins had become unbuckled from the bit, and she had no control whatever over the spirited and terror-stricken animal on which she was mounted. She could only cling wildly to the side-saddle with both hands and let matters take their course.

Bob Keane passed along up Main street until he came to its junction with the county road, and then kept on along the road. He was going to call on a particular friend of his named Dan Griswold. Dan lived on a farm with his parents, and helped to do his share of the work. A creek crossed the road at the beginning of the Griswold boundary line, and afterward diverged through the property.

Bob and Dan often rowed up and down this narrow stream, which emptied in a small lake two miles from the road. The county had built a substantial bridge over the creek connecting both ends of the road. The day previous, however, a heavy team, guided by an intoxicated driver, had smashed into and broken down one of the railings of the bridge, leaving it in a dangerous condition. Bob stopped to look at the damage the bridge had sustained. When he started on again he heard the rattle of wagon wheels from the direction of the village. A moment after the sharp and rapid click of a horse's hoofs on the hard road in front of him reached his ear.

"Somebody's racing down the road at a mighty fast clip," he muttered. "With a vehicle coming this way, if the two parties meet at the bridge, there is liable to be a serious mix-up, and with the railing broken I shouldn't be surprised if one of them went over into the creek."

Bob hurried forward with the intention of trying to warn the horseman, who was hidden by the bend in the highway. He had hardly gone a dozen yards before Jordan's little white mare, with Fanny Fairchild clinging fear-stricken to the saddle, came flying into sight, with bent head and tossing mane.

"My gracious!" exclaimed Bob, staring at the approaching animal and its helpless young rider. "This is a clear case of runaway. That girl stands a good chance of being killed at the



bridge. I must try and stop that horse somehow."

To stop a frightened animal coming at you like a small whirlwind is not a very easy thing to do, and no one knew that better than Bob. But the risk attending such a feat did not deter the brave boy in the least. The first thing he did was to tear off his jacket, spring into the middle of the road and wave it at the mare. The animal saw the apparition before it and swerved aside. For the moment her speed slackened by one-half, and Bob took instant advantage of the circumstance to make a grab at the bridle with his right hand, at the same time throwing his left around the mare's neck. The animal sprang forward and tried to shake the boy off, dragging him with her clear to the bridge. The wagon, which was approaching from the opposite direction, reached the bridge at the same time. Bob, however, succeeded in swinging the mare into the hedge and stopping her at the very edge of the broken rail.

It was an exceedingly narrow escape for Fanny, whose whitening face and staring eyes showed that she was on the point of fainting. As soon as Bob had arrested the animal's flight he turned and caught Fanny in his arms as she was sliding out of the saddle. The man driving the wagon had reined in at the center of the bridge. At that moment Mr. Fairchild himself came dashing down the road at a high speed in pursuit of his little girl. He was just in time to witness the final act of the little drama—the stoppage of the mare at the end of the broken bridge by Bob Keane.

### CHAPTER III.—Bob Borrows Two Hundred Dollars.

Mr. Fairchild sprang from the saddle and ran up to his daughter.

"Don't be alarmed, sir," chipped in Bob, reassuringly. "She's only fainted. I'll get some water out of the creek below. Better lay her on the grass."

The merchant obeyed the boy's suggestion and laid Fanny down on the soft turf by the side of the road, taking her head, with its mass of golden hair, on his knee. Bob climbed down to the creek, filled the top of his soft-crowned hat with water, and returned to the road. He held it while Mr. Fairchild dashed some of the liquid in his child's face and chafed her hands and temples. These simple methods presently brought the girl back to her senses.

"Father!" she murmured. "Where am I?"

Then her eyes rested on Bob, and instantly memory reasserted itself. She held out her hand to him and smiled faintly.

"I shall remember you as long as I live," she said. "What is your name?"

"Bob Keane, miss."

"Young man, you have saved my daughter's life," spoke up Mr. Fairchild, with considerable emotion. "I am very grateful to you."

"Don't mention it, sir. I am glad I was able to stop her horse. I knew the bridge was broken, and with that wagon coming this way, too, I was afraid——"

"I understand," interrupted the merchant, look-

ing down into the creek below with a shudder. "If the mare had gone off the bridge my daughter would surely have been killed or drowned."

"I saw the whole thing, sir," volunteered the wagoner. "I must say it was the pluckiest act I ever saw in my life. But it's like Bob Keane to do just such a thing. He is the smartest boy in the village."

"Oh, come now, Fenton, no bouquets, please," grinned Bob.

"I am sure I never can thank you enough, Master Keane," said Mr. Fairchild, as Fanny sat up and smiled again at the good-looking boy, whose bravery had much impressed her, as if she was not averse to cultivating his acquaintance. "I hope you will permit us to know you better. I and my daughter are stopping at Mr. Jordan's farm, about half a mile from here. We shall be very glad to have you call on us there as often as you can make it convenient. You must join with me in this invitation, Fanny."

"Yes, father. You will come, won't you?" she said sweetly, turning to Bob.

"Yes, miss, if you wish me to. Who shall I ask for?" he asked.

"My name is Fanny Fairchild. Now, when shall we expect to see you?"

"I'll come over in a day or so."

"Be sure that you do. I shall be on the lookout for you. Come to-morrow, in the afternoon, and take tea with us, won't you?"

Bob looked doubtful, although he was anxious to say yes.

"You will come, won't you?" the little miss persisted, with such a bewitching smile that the boy said yes and took the engagement.

"Now, young man," said Mr. Fairchild, "I hope you will allow me to testify my grateful appreciation of your services in a substantial manner. I owe you more than I could ever repay were I to give you my entire fortune. I should like to present you with \$500 now, simply as a little testimonial."

"No, sir. I cannot accept pay for what I did. You are both welcome to my services, for I guess any one would have acted as I did under the circumstances."

"I don't know about that, Master Keane. It isn't everybody that has the nerve, or even the inclination, to risk personal peril to save another's life. Now as a favor you'll accept this money, won't you?" and the merchant tendered Bob a roll of bills.

Fenton saw the roll of bills offered to Bob as he remounted his wagon and drove off. The boy shook his head. Then noticing that there was a big rent in his trousers, he said:

"If you want to get me a new suit of clothes I'll call it square."

"I'll buy you a new suit of clothes with great pleasure; but you must take the money, too."

"I wouldn't know what to do with \$500, sir. Besides, my Uncle Silas would take it away from me. He's my guardian, and lays claim to all that belongs to me."

"You could take it to Bloomfield and put it in the savings bank in your own name. A minor is permitted to keep a savings bank account," said the merchant, evidently anxious to find some way to induce the boy to accept the money.

His mentioning the name of Bloomfield suddenly reminded Bob of the Hazen Express Route.



which he was so anxious to embark in. Here was the opportunity for him to get the necessary sum to purchase the goodwill and "fixtures" which had been offered for sale by the widow of the late expressman. He had a strong objection to accepting any money for saving pretty Fanny Fairchild from perhaps a fatal ending to her ride; but he was not averse to borrowing \$200 of the amount her father seemed so desirous of pressing upon him in order to accomplish the desire of his heart.

"I'll tell you what I'll do, sir. I'll borrow \$200 from you, if you will let me have it that way. I want to go into the express business between Highland and Bloomfield. The man who worked the route died a while ago and his business is for sale."

"But I don't want to lend you \$200; I want to give you \$500."

"I will only borrow \$200," replied Bob, decidedly. "That is all I need to set myself up in business, and I don't believe in borrowing a cent more than is necessary."

"Very well," replied Mr. Fairchild, yielding the point, since he saw no other way of getting around the matter. "I will loan you the \$200 you want."

He handed Bob four \$50 bills.

"Thank you, sir. I will bring my note for this around to Mr. Jordan's when I call to-morrow afternoon."

"All right; please yourself," answered the merchant with a smile. "Now, here's \$25 to buy you a new suit of clothes. I hope you won't want to consider that a loan, too."

"No, sir. I'll accept that as a present, and buy the clothes as soon as I go to Highland."

The little white mare and the brown gelding had been nipping the grass by the roadside after a very contented fashion ever since they had been left to themselves. Fanny now stepped up to the mare with the intention of remounting her.

"Papa," she said, "will you fix the bridle-reins for me?"

"I will do that if you like," said Bob, eager to be of further service to the lovely little fairy. Bob reattached the reins in a secure way.

"Shall I help you mount?" he asked, a bit bashfully.

"Why, of course," she answered.

She put one foot in the stirrup and the boy lifted her into the saddle as gently as he would have handled a baby.

"Thank you," she said, smiling down on him. "Are you ready, papa?"

"All ready," answered her father, springing on the gelding's back.

"Good-by, Bob Keane," she said, extending her disengaged hand to him. "And, remember, I shall expect to see you to-morrow afternoon."

"Good-by, Miss Fanny, I'll be sure to call."

Fanny and her father started their animals at a brisk gallop back along the road they had come, leaving Bob delighted with the good fortune which had fallen to him.

#### CHAPTER IV.—Bob and His Friend Dan.

Bob stowed the four \$50 bills in one pocket and the \$25 in another, then he kept on up the road till he came to the lane which led to the

Griswold farmhouse. Dan Griswold was working industriously in the strawberry patch, but he was expecting to see his friend, as Bob had promised to come over to the farm that morning.

"Hello, Dan," exclaimed Bob. "I'll give you a lift while I'm here if you wish."

"All right. Pitch right in. Anything new in the village?"

"Yes. There's a new baby up at the Hitchcock's. It arrived last night," grinned Bob, as he began picking berries.

"Any other new thing?" asked Dan.

"Hazen's Express Route is for sale."

"Is that so? Somebody told me Mrs. Hazen was going to have her nephew carry it on."

"Must have changed her mind, for there's a notice in the postoffice offering the whole outfit for \$200."

"Do you know anybody that's going to buy it?"

"I do."

"Who is it?"

"Myself."

"Yourself!" exclaimed Dan, looking hard at his friend.

"That's what I said," answered Bob, coolly.

"Where do you expect to get \$200?"

"I've got it already."

"You have!" exclaimed Dan in great surprise.

"I have."

Bob told Dan how Fanny Fairchild's mount had run away with her, and how he had fortunately been on hand to save her and that he had borrowed \$200 from her father. Dan grinned when his friend described how pretty the girl was.

"Going to call on her to-morrow?" he chuckled.

"I hope so."

"You're lucky. When are you going to Bloomfield to buy the express route?"

"After dinner."

At that moment a horn sounded from the back door of the farmhouse.

"That means dinner," said Dan, straightening up and looking his satisfaction. "Come along and have a square meal. You'll find plenty on our table. Mother expects you."

"All right. I won't deny that I'm hungry. We had a glass of milk, some very weak porridge, a piece of bread with a little butter, and anticipations for breakfast."

"What do you mean by anticipations?" asked Dan, curiously.

"Anticipations of what we would have for dinner," grinned Bob.

"Oh!" snickered Dan, picking up one of the tin pails of berries, while Bob took the other.

Mrs. Griswold welcomed Bob in a hearty way that was positively refreshing to the lad, and Mr. Griswold, when he came in from the fields, had something friendly to say to him, too. Dan hadn't made any mistake when he said there would be plenty to eat on his mother's table.

"Well," said Bob, when he and Dan had left the table, "I'll go home now, put on my other suit, and go over to Bloomfield."

"I wish you luck, Bob," said Dan, as his friend started off down the lane.

#### CHAPTER V.—Mr. Kenwick Shaw.

Bob went into the house and started to go up into his room to dress himself, when Mr. Cobb saw him and called him back.



"Where have you been all morning?" he asked, with a frown.

"Different places," replied Bob. "Most of the time up at the Griswold farm."

"I s'pose you had your dinner, because if you hain't you won't get nothin' till tea time."

"I had something to eat with the Griswolds."

"Where are you goin' now?"

"Up to my room."

"Put on your good clothes. I want you to go to Highland to meet the 3:40 train. There's a man comin' up to look at the Chadwick farm. I expect to sell it to him."

Bob couldn't very well refuse to do his uncle's bidding, though he knew it would prevent him from going to Bloomfield that afternoon to make the purchase of the express route.

"Well," he said to himself, as he was donning his Sunday suit, "I'll go over early in the morning. I can have my breakfast in Bloomfield. Uncle Silas will be just as well pleased, for he'll save what I would eat, if Morris doesn't gobble it up himself."

So half an hour later, Bob, having hitched up Napoleon Bonaparte, Mr. Cobb's horse, called "Bony" for short—a name the villagers thought very appropriate because he seemed a veritable bundle of skin and bones—to the rickety wagon, drove out of the yard and took the country road for Highland, a village on the West Shore Railroad. Bob reached Highland at three o'clock, and had forty minutes to wait for the New York train. The train came in on time and the boy recognized his man by the description furnished by his uncle. His name was Kenwick Shaw.

"Are you the boy that's to take me out to Newtown?" he asked, as Bob approached him.

"Yes, sir. Let me take your grip."

The boy carried it out to the wagon and tossed it in.

"Now, sir, if you're ready, we'll start along," he said.

"What makes that horse so thin? Don't he get enough to eat?"

"Well, sir," replied Bob, without cracking a smile, "his name is Bony, and he likes to live up to his name."

"Oh, that's it, eh?" laughed the man. "I'm bound to say that the name fits him like a new glove."

"He's always looked this way since I can remember," chuckled Bob.

"I s'pose you know I've come up to look the Chadwick farm over with the idea of buying it," said Mr. Shaw.

"So Mr. Cobb said."

"Do you live with Mr. Cobb?"

"Yes, sir."

"Hired boy, I suppose?"

"No, sir. Mr. Cobb is my uncle and guardian."

"What is your name?"

"Bob Keane."

"Well, Bob. I rather like your face. You seem to be a bright, honest boy."

"Thank you, sir, for your good opinion."

"How far have we got to go?" asked Mr. Shaw, after a pause.

"About five miles, sir."

"Is Newtown a town or a village?"

"It's a village."

"What's the nearest town?"

"There's New Paltz, a good-sized place, about

three miles to the northwest, and Bloomfield, four miles or so to the south."

"How long have you lived in this vicinity?"

"Ever since I can remember."

"Does Mr. Cobb do any farming?"

"As much as can be expected on a ten-acre plot."

"I see. I s'pose you work around the place when you're not at school?"

"I did; but I'm not going to do so any more."

"Going to work in a store?"

"No, sir. I expect to run an express wagon route between Bloomfield and Highland."

"Going to hire out as the driver, eh?"

"No, sir. I'm going to buy the route and run it as my own business."

"You don't say. Think you can make it pay?"

"I think so or I shouldn't go into it."

"I thought you was a pretty clever boy," said Mr. Shaw, regarding Bob with fresh interest. "Your uncle must so consider you if he's willing to start you up in business."

"He isn't going to start me. I'm starting myself."

## CHAPTER VI.—Silas Cobb's Mysterious Midnight Movements.

Mr. Shaw was rather unpleasantly surprised at the third-rate appearance of the Cobb home. In a way it resembled Silas Cobb himself. The general aspect of the place prepared Mr. Shaw for what he might expect to see in the real estate agent he had come to do business with, and we are bound to say that he was not disappointed. Silas Cobb's office occupied one of the lower front rooms. Over the door was a weather-stained sign which read:

SILAS COBB,

Auctioneer and Real Estate.

Mr. Cobb came out to greet his visitor, whom he expected to stay all night, though the cost of the extra victuals was a severe tax upon his economical principles.

"Step right into my office, Mr. Shaw," said Mr. Cobb, screwing his countenance into as genial an expression as it was possible for him to do. "I can give you all the particulars of the farm before we go in to supper."

Mr. Shaw followed his host into his small and cheerless office, while Bob drove Bony and the wagon around into the yard, unharnessed the faithful, half-starved animal and led him into his dilapidated stall. Bob and Bony were great friends. The horse seemed to realize that the boy was the only one who took the least interest in his welfare. Bony would probably have gone to the bone heap long ago but for Bob, who by the greatest ingenuity managed to keep the life in his attenuated frame by feeding him on the sly an extra quantity of oats.

Morris Cobb was, for a wonder, making himself useful to his stepmother. The sudden interest he displayed in the culinary department was owing to the fact that the advent of a visitor necessitated the preparation of a number of table delicacies not often seen in the Cobb home, and the boy's mouth was watering in anticipation of the coming feast. His idea was to try and make



himself solid with his father's wife, so that he might hope to get a little more than his share of the good things. Bob met him at the well drawing a pail of water.

"You seem to have got busy all at once," grinned Bob. "What's the matter? Trying to reduce your flesh?"

Morris laughed slyly, lifted the pail full of water and went into the kitchen. Bob looked in through the dining-room window later and saw the visitor sitting in his (Bob's) place.

"It looks as if I was going to come in for the short end again," said Bob to himself gloomily. "What's the use of being worth \$10,000 if one has to be half-starved? Well, if they put it over me in that way to-night I'll go up to Mrs. Kydd's and get my supper. It's a good thing I've got money in my pocket."

That put Bob in mind of his \$225. It suddenly struck him that it might not be quite safe for him to carry that amount in his clothes into the house. Mr. Cobb had such a keen nose for money that it was possible he might even smell it upon his person. In such an event he wouldn't rest until he found some way of getting hold of it, and that would be a dreadful calamity for the boy. So Bob sat down on the edge of the well and considered where he had better hide his money. After some deliberation he decided to hide it in the barn. Morris hardly ever went in there, and Mr. Cobb very seldom. Bob therefore went to the stable and looked around. He found a loose board in one corner, and under the loose board he put all his money but a \$5 bill. The \$5 he stowed away in his vest.

When Bob entered the kitchen he was not surprised to hear from Mrs. Cobb that he wasn't to have his supper until the rest had eaten theirs. It wasn't pleasant for him to sit on the doorstep, while the others were enjoying a good supper in the little dining-room, for Bob was hungry, in spite of the good dinner he had had at the Griswold farm. But the boy didn't kick, for it wasn't his nature to revolt at what he couldn't change, and so he waited patiently for his turn to come. When he was called inside the table looked as if it had been struck by a cyclone.

However, he found that by some good luck all the eatables had not disappeared, and that enough remained to satisfy his appetite. Morris was evidently disappointed that Bob really got a fair share of the provender, for he had been counting on seeing his cousin go half supperless to bed. Mr. Cobb carried a pair of chairs outside in front of the house, and there he and his guest sat and smoked and talked about the Chadwick property and other matters until the clock inside struck nine, and then the real estate man hinted that it was time to retire for the night. Mr. Shaw was shown to a room occupied jointly by Bob and Morris. Morris' bed, being the better of the two, was allotted to the visitor while its customary occupant had to turn in with his cousin.

Mr. Shaw had wondered why room hadn't been made at the supper table for Bob. He sized up Morris, and the estimate he formed of his character was not particularly flattering. However, he figured that, as the latter was the real estate man's son, while Bob was only his nephew, Morris, when it came to a pinch, had all the

advantage of the situation. Mr. Shaw had brought several hundred dollars with him to pay down on the contract if the Chadwick farm suited him. He had three \$100 bills and four \$50 bills. He counted this as he sat on the edge of the bed, to see if it was all right.

Morris watched him turn over the ends of the bills one by one, and the figures thereon interested him greatly. Mr. Shaw divided the money, putting the three big bills in one pocket of his vest, and the four lesser bills in another. Then he finished disrobing and went to bed, after blowing out the lamp as he had been requested to do.

A couple of hours later Silas Cobb entered the room softly in his stocking feet and listened intently to the breathing of the three sleepers. Whatever his business was there he did not strike a light, and he moved about as noiselessly as a shadow. Finally he uttered a grunt of satisfaction and left the room as softly as he had entered it. Daylight was flitting through the window panes when Bob awoke.

He jumped out of bed and started to dress. He noticed a pair of trousers on the floor near the head of the bed. Picking them up, he found it was not his own, but was Morris', so he threw it on top of the rest of his cousin's clothes, finished dressing himself in his best suit, and then left the room without disturbing the other sleepers. He went to the barn, got his money from the place where he had concealed it and then started off on foot for Bloomfield.

## CHAPTER VII.—The Missing Money.

It was about six o'clock when Morris woke up. He hurriedly dressed himself and left the house, making a bee-line for the back of the barn. Looking carefully around to see that he was quite alone, he thrust his hand into the right pocket of his trousers. He withdrew it with a disappointed look, and then dived into the other pocket. A look of blank amazement came over his features. Whatever he had expected to find was not there. He went through both pockets once more with the same result, and then he sat down on the ground with a look on his face that would have led an observer to suppose he had just lost his only friend on earth. It was about this time that Mr. Shaw turned over in bed, opened his eyes and discovered that it was morning. He looked at his watch and saw that it was twenty minutes of seven.

"Time to get up, I guess," he said to himself, as he put his feet out on the floor.

He dressed himself leisurely. After he put on his vest he mechanically put his hands into the pockets in which he had deposited his two rolls of bills. The \$300 wad was there all right, but the four \$50 bills were missing.

"That's funny," he remarked. "I must have dropped them on the floor last night when I thought I placed them in my pocket."

So he looked around the rag carpet for some trace of the bills. There was no sign of them anywhere, though he shook out the bed-clothes under the supposition that they might have lodged on the coverlet. Then he searched all his pockets very carefully without the least result.



"The money evidently is gone," he said, with a frown. "I wonder if that young Cobb could have stolen it during the night? I saw him looking at me while I was counting it. This matter will have to be investigated, for I can't afford to lose \$200."

He completed his toilet, went downstairs, found Silas Cobb in his office writing and reported his loss.

"What's that?" exclaimed the auctioneer, looking up in a startled way. "You say that \$200 was taken from your vest pocket during the night?"

"That's just what I mean to say, sir," replied the visitor brusquely. "I brought up \$500 with me to pay down on the contract if my inspection of the Chadwick farm proved satisfactory. Last night as I was undressing I counted the money to see if it was all right, and found that it was. I separated it into two parts, placing the three \$100 bills in one pocket and the four \$50 bills in another. This morning I found that the four bills had vanished during the night."

Mr. Cobb looked very much disturbed. The fingers of his right hand twitched as he drummed with them nervously on his desk.

"That—is—most distressing news," said the auctioneer, in an agitated voice.

"It is certainly not pleasant for me," replied Mr. Shaw decidedly. "I haven't so much money that I can afford to lose \$200."

"I hope you don't think that I or any member of my family took your money?" said Mr. Cobb hastily, as he got up from his chair with the intention of going to the chamber and searching for the lost bills.

"I have accused no one in particular of taking it as yet," replied the visitor.

Silas Cobb requested his visitor to follow him upstairs to the room where he slept the preceding night. They both made a thorough search of the room, but their efforts availed nothing toward bringing the missing bills to light.

"I can't imagine how you could have lost your money. You are sure that you placed those bills in your vest pocket?" said Mr. Cobb, placing an emphasis on the word vest.

"I am positive that I did," replied Mr. Shaw. "In any event, they are not in any pocket of my clothes."

While they were talking Mrs. Cobb went to the office to call them to breakfast. Not finding them there, and hearing their voices up in the chamber, she climbed the stairway to inform them that the morning meal was ready. Her sharp eyes detected that something was wrong.

"What's the trouble?" she asked curiously.

Her husband told her that Mr. Shaw had lost \$200 of his money during the night.

"For goodness' sake!" she ejaculated. "I hope he doesn't think that you stole his money, Silas."

"I haven't accused your husband, madam," replied the visitor.

"It seems strange, Martha, that his money could have gone," said her husband.

Mrs. Cobb asked Mr. Shaw the same questions her spouse had already propounded to him and received the same answers.

"Have you seen Bob this morning?" asked the lady suddenly.

"No," answered Mr. Cobb.

"I heard him go downstairs at daylight, and I

haven't seen nothin' of him since. It ain't usual for him to get up so early," she added, suspiciously.

She went over to where the boy's clothes were hung on the wall.

"Why," she exclaimed, with a sort of acid surprise, "if he ain't dressed himself in his best suit. What does that mean?"

"It means he's gone visitin', I s'pose," grunted Silas Cobb.

"Gone visitin' at half-past four in the mornin'! Fiddle-de-dee! It's my idee he's gone for good. He's been threatenin' to do somethin' desprit for a month past."

"Why should the boy run away?" asked Mr. Shaw, in some surprise. "This is his home, isn't it?"

"Of course it's his home," snapped Mrs. Cobb. "And we've treated him jest the same as if he was our own son, hain't we, Silas?"

Her husband backed up her statement.

"Then I don't see why you should think he has run away just because he put on his best suit this morning and went out unusually early," said the visitor.

"Because I've suspicioned he meant to do somethin' like that. He hain't been no good about the place for over a month. I couldn't get him to do nothin'. He's got to be a lazy, good-for-nothin' boy, that's what he has," said the lady spitefully.

"He didn't look like a lazy boy to me—quite the opposite. In fact, I don't think that I ever saw a brighter and smarter appearing lad," replied Mr. Shaw, who was clearly prepossessed in Bob's favor.

"That's because you don't know him," snorted Mrs. Cobb, tossing her head.

"I'm not far wrong in my first estimate of a boy," replied the visitor, firmly but politely.

"Huh!" she sniffed. "It's my opinion Bob Keane saw you countin' your money last night, and noticin' that there was a lot of it he waited till you was asleep, got up and helped himself to a share of it. Then he laid his plans for leavin' at daylight afore any of us was up. He wouldn't have put on his best clothes if somethin' wasn't in the wind. You can't tell me nothin' about that boy. I've always suspicioned he was a sly one, and now I'm sure of it," and the lady nodded her head emphatically.

"There's no more reason for accusing this boy, Bob of taking my money than of suspecting your stepson who also slept in this room, and whom I saw watching me when I was counting the bills."

"The idea! Just as if Morris would think of takin' your money!" exclaimed Mrs. Cobb indignantly. "Morris is a good boy. Silas!" sharply, "why don't you defend your son?"

Mr. Cobb hastened to assure his visitor that Morris was one of the best boys in the county, and that stealing money was not in his line.

"I beg your pardon," replied Mr. Shaw hastily, seeing that he had stirred up a hornet's nest. "I did not intimate that I thought your son had robbed me."

"I think we had better go to breakfast," suggested the real estate man, who looked anxious and disturbed. "We can look into the matter afterward."

"I think so, too," said his wife emphatically.



"The things will be stone cold, if they hain't already."

Accordingly Mr. Cobb led the way downstairs to the dining-room, where the lady of the house hastened to dish up a round-steak, with fried potatoes and hot biscuits. She called Morris, who appeared to be in a disconsolate humor, and then the four sat down to the morning meal.

## CHAPTER VIII.—In Which It is Decided That Bob Keane Is A Thief.

Although nothing was said at the table about the theft of the \$200, nevertheless Silas Cobb was doing some tall thinking on the subject. If his visitor had really lost that sum of money, and there seemed to be little doubt but he had, he was satisfied that Bob was the person who had surreptitiously taken the four bills soon after the man had gone to sleep. Why was Mr. Cobb so certain in his own mind that his nephew was the guilty party? Let us explain. On the preceding afternoon, while Bob was at Hilands awaiting the arrival of the 3:40 train from New York, Mr. Cobb met Fenton, the wagoner. Fenton told him how he had seen Bob, at the risk of his life, rescue the little daughter of an early summer boarder at Jordan's, named Fairchild, from almost certain death, and that he had seen the grateful father tender the boy a roll of bills.

"Bob didn't seem inclined to take the money, as I drove off," Fenton said. "I thought he was a fool, but it wasn't any of my business."

"But he might have taken it after you left," said Silas Cobb eagerly.

"That's true. He might have done so. Have you seen him since morning?"

"Yes; but he didn't say nothin' to me about havin' a roll of money."

"Maybe he didn't want you to know anything about it."

"He hain't got no right to keep such a thing to himself. If he has a roll of money in his possession I have a right to know it. I'm his guardian, and the law says I must take care of all his property. I'm goin' to speak to him about it to-night."

It happened, however, that Mr. Cobb, being fully engaged with his visitor, found no chance to talk to his nephew on the subject. He did not forget the matter, though. Several times he asked himself if Bob really did get a roll of money from the grateful gentleman, and if so how much did it amount to. It must be considerable—probably as much as \$100.

Finally Silas Cobb decided that he would wait till after Bob, his son and his guest had gone to bed and had had time to get to sleep. Then he meant to go softly up to the chamber and search Bob's clothes for the money, which he more than ever believed he had. But there were forces at work that Mr. Cobb never dreamed of.

When Mr. Shaw was counting his money he noticed that Morris Cobb's eyes were on him. He thought little of the matter and in due time dropped asleep. Morris, however, didn't go to sleep as soon as he naturally would have done. The sight of so much money in the visitor's vest interested him greatly. He needed money badly himself, for his father seldom gave him a cent,

and when he did it came from him like the drawing of a back tooth. Here was a chance to get a good sum, and he thought without suspicion attaching to himself, for he meant to get up before the visitor awoke and hide the money. So, with this purpose in his mind, he waited for an hour listening to the man's deep breathing while he was trying to summon up enough courage to steal the bills.

At last he got out of bed, crawled softly to the visitor's bed, and as he had carefully noted where Mr. Shaw had hung his vest, he inserted his fingers into one of the pockets, felt the bills and hastily drew them out. He had no idea how much the notes amounted to, nor did he care, but he guessed they represented a sum sufficient for his needs. He returned to the bed, thrust them hastily into one of his trousers pockets, and after a while fell asleep.

Fifteen minutes afterward Silas Cobb came into the room like a shadow. He went directly to the boy's bed, and taking up Bob's trousers searched them without success. Then he thought maybe he had hold of his son's trousers by mistake, so he took up Morris' pants, and going through them his talon-like fingers closed on the bills. With a grunt of satisfaction, he threw down the trousers and left the room. When he got to his own room he examined the bills and saw there were four of them, each of the denomination of \$50.

"So this is what he got from that Mr. Fairchild, eh?" he muttered grimly. "Well, I guess I can take care of them better than he. I'll tell him to-morrow that I've got 'em, and that when he gets to be twenty-one, if he lives so long, he can have 'em back."

With this comfortable reflection, Mr. Cobb turned in for the night. In the morning when Morris rushed behind the barn to count his ill-gotten money he was astonished to discover that the bills he had stolen had taken flight during the night. At first he couldn't account for the mystery, but not seeing Bob anywhere about the premises, he came to the conclusion that Bob had not been asleep when he took the money; that he had seen him do the deed, and then foxily waited for him (Morris) to get asleep, when he had abstracted the money for himself.

"That's why he got up before me," snarled Morris furiously. "He knows I won't dare to squeal. Oh, the villain! I'd like to kill him!"

As matters stood, it was clearly up to Mr. Cobb to make an explanation of the circumstances as he saw them, and restore the \$200 to Mr. Shaw. There were two reasons, however, why Silas Cobb hesitated to clear up the mystery—the first was that he was ashamed to acknowledge to his visitor that he was mean enough to creep upstairs in the dead of night and go through his nephew's clothes in order to deprive the boy of money which he supposed he had earned at the risk of his life; the second was that Mr. Cobb, who loved money better than anything else in this world, was sorely tempted to take advantage of the mix-up to return the \$200 in question, for he hated to give up a dollar once he got his fingers on it.

After breakfast the real estate man and his guest adjourned to the office. There was one thing Mr. Cobb wanted to know before he finally decided whether he would hold on to the \$200.



Pointing to a chair, he cleared his throat and then asked the gentleman if he thought he would be able to recognize the missing bills if he saw them again.

"Yes, sir," replied Mr. Shaw promptly. "The four bills were all issued by the same bank—the Manhattan National of New York City, and I have their numbers in my memorandum book. That is a precaution I always take when carrying bills of large denominations around with me."

This reply seemed to disconcert Silas Cobb, and for a moment or two he said nothing and drummed nervously on his desk.

"It is very strange my nephew should absent himself in such a mysterious way," he said presently. "I'm afraid——"

At that moment Mrs. Cobb burst into the office in a triumphant manner.

"What did I tell you? I know'd Bob Keane took that money. Come in here, Morris, and tell your father what Bob said to you in the post-office yesterday mornin'."

Morris, who was at his stepmother's heels, came forward and told his story. He said that he and Bob had gone to the post-office the previous morning, and while there had seen a notice which stated that Hazen's Express route was for sale and could be bought for \$200.

"Bob said he wished he had \$200," went on Morris, maliciously, satisfied that his evidence would get his cousin into a peck of trouble, for he was sure Bob intended to use the money (which Morris supposed his cousin had taken from his trousers pocket while he slept) to purchase the express route, "so he could buy out the route and run it himself. He said he was certain he could make a raft of money."

"There, now," spoke up Mrs. Cobb, when Morris had concluded, regarding Mr. Shaw with a look of intense satisfaction, "I guess you'll believe what I say another time. I s'pose you know what's come of your money now. It's as plain as the nose on your face that that boy saw you countin' your money and made up his mind to get \$200 to buy that route. Why didn't he take the whole of your money while he was about it? Because he only wanted \$200. Now, mark my words, he's gone to Bloomfield, and has bought that outfit by this time. It's easy enough for you to go to that place, call on the Widder Hazen, and see if I hain't right. You'll find them four fifties of yours in her pocket. Then all you need do is to have the constable arrest Bob. He'll confess soon enough when he's in jail. After that the widder 'll have to give up the money and take her rig back."

Mrs. Cobb stated the case like a female lawyer, and she was as certain she was right as that the sun shone at the moment. Things certainly did look black against poor honest Bob, who always prided himself as being on the square. Even Mr. Shaw began to have some doubts, after all, concerning his estimate of the boy's character. Mr. Cobb, however, chuckled to himself as he listened to his wife's deduction. While he had little doubt but she was right in her conclusions, he knew that it would be only a waste of time to go to Bloomfield on an investigation tour, since the money on which Bob depended to buy the route was now in his uncle's possession, therefore it stood to reason, thought

Mr. Cobb, that Bob, not having the price, could not buy the route.

"Well," snapped Mrs. Cobb, impatiently, "why don't you get busy, Silas? It's your place to hitch up Bony to the wagon and take Mr. Shaw to Bloomfield. I calculate he's anxious to get his money back."

As Mr. Cobb was ruled by his wife in every particular except in money matters, in which, fortunately for their domestic felicity, they were both of a mind, he got up and prepared to follow out her suggestion.

"You'd better take the constable with you, pa," Morris shouted after him, "or Bob 'll be sure to cut his stick when he sees you are after him."

The trip to Bloomfield, however, was not made after all. As Mr. Cobb led his rig out of the yard and around to the front door who should he seen driving smartly down the road, perched on the seat of Hazen's express wagon, but Bob Keane, and he looked as independent, too, as a hog on ice. Silas Cobb was so astonished he could only stand and stare open-mouthed as his nephew approached.

#### CHAPTER IX.—In Which Bob Finds Himself In A Grave Fix.

It was with an elastic step that Bob left the Cobb yard that morning, walked up Main street, and took the road to Bloomfield. As he tramped along, his imagination was fired with roseate visions of the future, and he pictured to himself the satisfaction he would take out of being his own boss.

"I ought to make a good thing hauling the trunks of the summer boarders to and from Hiland's this season, and carrying some of the boarders, too. I can fix it with the farmers, who hate to hitch up a team to go all that distance to fetch a single guest, or perhaps two. They'd much rather leave the job to me. I can charge a quarter a head and a quarter for a trunk, and carry a whole lot of packages besides, for the Hazen wagon is a good-sized one, and covered at that. I dare say Uncle Silas will raise Cain at first, and will insist that I turn over all the money I get to him; but he's going to be disappointed. I'm ready to do the square thing by him—further than that, nixy."

Thus figuring on the future, and building many air castles, Bob reached Bloomfield and directed his steps to the cottage of Widow Hazen, which was on the suburbs of the town. It was seven o'clock when Bob knocked on Mrs. Hazen's door. He announced his mission and was asked to walk in. Mrs. Hazen and the little Hazens were at breakfast, and the boy was cordially invited to sit up at the table and partake of the frugal breakfast. Bob politely declined on the score that he was in a hurry, so Mrs. Hazen took him to her barn and showed him the horse, wagon and harness that went with the route. The boy could judge a horse as well as an experienced dealer, and after a critical survey of the outfit decided that it was worth the money asked.

Many persons in the boy's place would have tried to beat the widow down in her price, and probably would have succeeded, as she needed the money badly, but Bob prided himself on being "on the square," and as he honestly believed



the horse, wagon and good-will of the route was worth more than Mrs. Hazen asked he scorned to resort to the dickering process.

The woman looked pleased and apparently relieved, for she had expected to have to take possibly \$25 off in order to make the sale.

"Who is it for?" she asked.

"For myself," replied Bob, in a business-like tone.

The woman looked a bit surprised.

"You seem young to run this business," she said. "How old are you?"

"Sixteen."

"Well, you look stout and hearty. Maybe you'll get along."

"Have you a list of Mr. Hazen's customers?"

"I have his memorandum book—that has all the names in it—which I'll let you have."

"Thank you, ma'am. We'll go back to the house now. I want you to make out a bill of sale—my name is Robert Keane—and then I'll pay you the money."

Mrs. Hazen made out the bill of sale in proper shape and handed it to Bob. He passed over the four fifty dollar bills he received from Mr. Fairchild.

"Boys like you don't often have \$200 to invest in a business," the woman said with a smile.

She was of an unsuspicious nature, and did not dream of asking the boy where he got so much money.

"That's right, Mrs. Hazen. I only came into possession of that money yesterday by a piece of good luck," said Bob, and then he told her how he rescued Fanny Fairchild. "Her father wanted to give me \$500 outright; but I wouldn't take it. I don't believe in accepting money under those circumstances. I borrowed those four fifties from him because I saw that the Hazen route was for sale and I wanted to get hold of it."

Bob did not take any special note of the bills, though he noticed that one of them was on the First National Bank of Albany, and that it had a red cross marked on the back. The deal having been settled, Bob went back to the barn, hitched up the team and drove out of the yard. He had asked Mrs. Hazen to direct him to a sign painter and she had told him he would find one next to the Times newspaper office on Main street. Bob drove down there and arranged with the painter to put his name "Keane" in place of "Hazen" on the wagon, and the man promised to have it done when the boy returned from the restaurant where he was going to get his breakfast.

Before Bob left Bloomfield he bought a supply of oats for his horse and for poor, abused Bony as well. Then he started off at a brisk pace for Newtown. On the way back he prepared himself for the expected run-in with his guardian. The prospect was not encouraging, but he intended to stand by his gun like a little man.

"If Uncle Silas gets too frisky I'll take up quarters at the Griswold farm. Dan said I could come over there any time I wanted to."

Comforted with the reflection that Silas Cobb didn't cut a great figure in the village, and that he could count on the sympathy and encouragement of the people of his neighborhood, Bob chattered to his horse and felt as cheerful respecting the future as if he owned a farm. He wouldn't have been quite so happy if he had

known what was awaiting him at his uncle's home. Morris noticed Bob's approach almost as soon as his father did, and he yelled to his mother to come out and look. Bob was not much surprised at the sensation his appearance created, but he did not dream of the true reason therefor. He stopped in front of the office and waited for his uncle to come up, for he wanted to have matters settled then and there, so he could tell where he stood.

"So you've got back, have you?" said Silas, not able to understand how the boy came to be in possession of the Hazen express wagon when, according to his point of view, he didn't have the money to pay for the outfit.

"Yes, sir," replied Bob cheerfully.

"I needn't ask if you have been to Bloomfield, for I see you have," said Mr. Cobb, eyeing the horse and wagon askance.

"Yes, sir! I went over this morning to buy the Hazen Express Route for myself."

"So you've bought Hazen's Express Route, have you?" replied Mr. Cobb, with a sneer. "P'raps you don't mind tellin' me where you got the money to pay for it."

"I have no objection to telling you, sir. I borrowed \$200 from Mr. William Fairchild, who is stopping up at Jordan's, yesterday morning."

"What's that?" roared the real estate man, hardly believing his ears.

Bob was so obliging as to repeat his words.

"Don't you believe him, Silas!" shrieked Mrs. Cobb, shaking her fist in the air. "He bought that there horse and wagon with the money he stole from Mr. Shaw."

Bob heard Mrs. Cobb's words in blank astonishment. He thought she must have suddenly gone crazy. Mr. Cobb knew that the boy hadn't used the money in question to buy the Hazen route because he (Cobb) had it in his pocket at that moment; but he judged that Bob had persuaded Widow Hazen to let him have it on credit. Of course he didn't believe that Mr. Fairchild had loaned Bob \$200. If he had, Mr. Shaw wouldn't have lost his \$200, because, according to his way of thinking, the temptation for Bob to steal the money would not then have existed. Silas Cobb, however, was shrewd enough to see that he must act just as if he had not gone up to the chamber at midnight and abstracted that \$200 from the trousers he supposed belonged to his nephew.

"I am sorry, Robert," he said in a mild, hypocritical tone, "to find that you are a very wicked boy."

"Why, what do you mean?" demanded Bob, amazed at the turn affairs were taking.

"I mean that Mr. Shaw lost \$200 last night while he was asleep, and the evidence points to you as the one who took it."

"Mr. Shaw," cried out Bob, energetically, "have you charged me with taking \$200 of your money?"

"No, Bob," replied the visitor, "I have not charged you with the theft, but I am sorry to say that appearance seems to fasten the guilt on you."

"What do you mean by appearance, sir?"

"Well, you left the house very early this morning, which your uncle's wife says was something unusual for you to do. When I got up I found that \$200 of \$500 I had brought with me from



New York to pay down on the Chadwick farm was missing. Your cousin Morris says that you wanted \$200 very badly to buy out the Hazen Express Route. Well, you seem to have bought it. If you can satisfy me that you came honestly by that horse and wagon I have nothing further to say, and will apologize for having suspected you of taking my money."

"I can easily prove that the \$200 I paid this morning to Mrs. Hazen rightfully belonged to me," replied Bob, promptly.

"Do you mean to say that you paid \$200 in actual money to Widder Hazen this mornin' for that outfit?" gasped Mr. Cobb, who could not understand how such a thing could be, though the others could easily understand it.

"I did," replied Bob, while Mr. Shaw, Mrs. Cobb and Morris looked at Silas in some surprise.

Mr. Cobb saw he had made a bad break and covered it up by telling Bob that he hoped he could prove his words.

"Sure I can. If you and Mr. Shaw will jump in my wagon I'll drive you up to Mr. Jordan's, and you can put the matter up to Mr. Fairchild."

"That's fair enough," admitted the visitor. "Come along, Mr. Cobb, it is only right the boy should have a chance to clear himself as speedily as possible."

Mrs. Cobb sniffed contemptuously, and said it was her opinion that Bob Keane was up to some trick, for since it was plain to be seen that he had stolen the money it was utterly impossible for him to show that Mr. Fairchild had given it to him. However, Bob carried his point and drove his uncle and the visitor to the Jordan farm.

"I want to see Mr. Fairchild," said Bob to Mr. Jordan, when he reined the team up in front of the farmhouse.

"I'm afraid you'll be disappointed," replied the farmer.

"Why?" asked Bob.

"Because Mr. Fairchild and his daughter left for New York on the eight o'clock train this morning," was the unexpected reply.

#### CHAPTER X.—Morris and His Stepmother Are Disappointed.

"Went away this morning!" exclaimed the boy in genuine amazement. "Why, Miss Fanny made me promise I would call and see her this afternoon."

"So she told me," replied Mr. Jordan, "and she left a note that I was to hand you when you come. I will get it for you."

Silas Cobb was very much relieved to find that Bob could not show that Mr. Fairchild had given him \$200, because his ability to do so would have complicated matters exceedingly. He made no remark one way or the other, and presently Mr. Jordan brought out the note and handed it to Bob. The boy tore it open and read it eagerly. It ran as follows:

"Jordan Farm, June 16, 191—.

"Dear Bob Keane: Papa received a telegram from New York early this morning calling him back to the city on urgent business, and, of course, I have to go with him. I am very sorry

to disappoint you this afternoon, but it cannot be helped. We expect to be back in a week, and then you and I must make up for lost time. Good-by. I shall never forget, nor will papa, that you saved my life yesterday. Please understand that we are both deeply grateful to you, and will be as long as we live. Yours sincerely,

"Fanny Fairchild."

When Bob finished reading the note he handed it to Mr. Shaw, who glanced over and returned it.

"It is evidently not your fault," he said, "that we have failed to meet Mr. Fairchild; therefore I think you are entitled to the benefit of the doubt."

"Thank you, sir," answered Bob, gratefully. "You are a gentleman."

There was nothing more to be done at the Jordan farm, so Bob turned around and drove back. On the road he learned all the particulars of the loss of Mr. Shaw's money.

"Well, sir, all I can say is that I didn't take it," he said earnestly. "It is a curious thing that you should happen to lose the exact amount that I paid for this outfit. That makes the affair look bad for me."

They found Mr. Cobb and Morris eagerly awaiting their return. Noticing that Bob had lost something of his confident air, the lady immediately jumped to the correct conclusion that the mission had been unattended with results.

"Well," she exclaimed, with a triumphant air, "you found out that Bob was lyin' about Mr. Fairchild givin' him \$200, didn't you?"

"No, madam, we did not," replied the visitor, rather disgusted with the lady's insistence that Bob was guilty of the theft. "We found that Mr. Fairchild had been unexpectedly called to New York this morning."

"Then I'll bet Bob knowed about it, that's why he was so ready to carry you up to the Jordan farm. He knowed Mr. Fairchild warn't there."

To these unfriendly remarks the gentleman made no reply. He was beginning to shift his suspicions from Bob to the whole Cobb family.

"Well, Mr. Cobb," he said, dropping all further reference to his missing money, "let us go over and look at the Chadwick farm."

"Hain't you goin' to have that boy took up for stealin' your \$200?" asked Mrs. Cobb, in great astonishment.

"Not at present, madam," replied Mr. Shaw, coldly.

Both Morris and his stepmother looked their disappointment. Silas Cobb appeared to be rather relieved than otherwise, for to tell the truth, he did not care for an official investigation of the case. He hoped that his visitor might let the matter go by default. He readily agreed to accompany Mr. Shaw to the Chadwick farm, and as Bony was still standing hitched to the wagon in front of the office the two men got in and drove away. Mrs. Cobb returned to the kitchen in a huff, but Morris remained outside eyeing Bob with no kindly expression. He was debating whether it was safe for him to accuse Bob of taking the \$200 out of the trousers pocket. He decided that it was too risky, for he did not doubt but Bob would not only deny the act, but would immediately report his words to Mr. Shaw, and this would put the burden of the guilt on



him. Of course he felt sure that the theft could not be brought home to him, but the bare suspicion that he was mixed up in the matter would serve to help Bob out of his predicament, and he earnestly hoped that Bob would be eventually convicted, as, in his opinion, he deserved to be.

"I s'pose you're happy now," he finally said to Bob, with a sneer. "You managed to get the \$200 you wanted so bad, and you've bought the express route."

"And you think with your stepmother that I stole the \$200," flashed Bob.

"Well, you know whether you stole it or not," replied Morris, pointedly.

"I know it was loaned to me by Mr. Fairchild."

"You ought to be able to prove it, then."

"How can I when Mr. Fairchild has returned to New York?"

"What did he go to New York for at the very moment you want to see him? Looks funny to me. Just as funny as that Mr. Shaw should lose the exact amount that you wanted to pay for the express route."

"I don't deny but the whole thing looks queer; but it will come out all right in the end," said Bob, confidently.

"I hope it will," said Morris, nodding his head.

"I hope the person that stole that \$200 will get showed up."

"I hope he will, too."

"Well, if he hasn't a nerve," thought Morris, as he turned on his heel and was about to re-enter the house, when he stopped and turned around. "What are you going to do with that horse and wagon?" he asked his cousin.

"What do you think I bought it for? To look at it?"

"You've got to keep it somewhere, provided my father'll let you keep it."

"I don't think he'll have anything to say about it."

"Why won't he? He's your guardian. If he objects to you having that horse and wagon he can take it away from you and sell it."

"No, he can't."

"Why not? What's to prevent him?"

"That horse and wagon practically belongs to Mr. Fairchild until I have paid him the \$200 I owe him."

"That's all rot. You're a minor and can't own nothing."

"That's just what I told you. The outfit belongs to Mr. Fairchild till it's paid for. Maybe it won't be paid for till I'm twenty-one," grinned Bob.

Not being able to answer that argument, Morris switched back again.

"Where are you going to keep your rig?"

"I'd like to keep the horse in our barn. I'm willing to pay your father for the accommodation."

"Maybe he'd let you if you swopped horses with him," grinned Morris.

"That would suit me," said Bob. "I'll give him this animal for Bony and a year's rent of a stall in the barn."

"You would?"

"I would."

"I'll tell him what you said; but before anything is done about it you'll have to prove that you didn't pay for the rig with Mr. Shaw's money."

"I expect to be able to prove that in a week."

"How will you?"

"Mr. Fairchild will probably return to Jordan's by that time."

"How do you know he will?"

"Fanny, his daughter, told me so in a note she left at Jordan's for me explaining the cause of their sudden departure."

Morris was satisfied in his own mind that Bob was bluffing, just as he was sure that Bob had taken the money which belonged to Mr. Shaw out of his pocket.

"You say Mr. Fairchild loaned you \$200?" went on Morris.

"Yes."

"How long have you known him?"

"I only met him once, and that was yesterday morning."

"And you had the nerve to ask him for the loan of \$200?"

"He offered me \$500."

"What for?"

"Saving his daughter from possible death."

"And you refused to take \$500?" said Morris, incredulously. "Do you expect me to believe that?"

"I don't care whether you believe is or not," replied Bob, independently.

"Well, I don't," replied Morris, tartly, turning around and entering the house.

## CHAPTER XI.—Bob Starts In To Do Business.

Bob drove to the post-office and took down the "For Sale" notice put up in the interest of Mrs. Hazen. In place of it he tacked up the following announcement, which he prepared in the store:

### KEANE'S EXPRESS. "Formerly Hazen's."

On and after the 16th day of June the undersigned is prepared to undertake the prompt delivery of all kinds of light cases, trunks, packages, etc., between Highland and Bloomfield, inclusive—two trips, morning and afternoon. Also, by special arrangement, to any point within a radius of six miles of Newtown and five miles of Bloomfield. Charges moderate. Address, Bob Keane, Newtown Post-office.

Duplicates of the above bill Bob tacked up in the Blomfield, Darlington and Highland post-offices before night and gave an order to a Bloomfield printer for 250 circulars which he subsequently mailed to all the customers of the late Mr. Hazen and to every farmer within the limits of his route. He carried his first freight that afternoon—a dozen crates of strawberries and four crates of asparagus from the Griswold farm to Highland station enroute to New York City. At Highland he picked up a full load of general merchandise for Bloomfield. He stopped at his home in Newtown to have a talk with his uncle about using the vacant stall next to Bony's in the barn.

"I can't make no arrangements with you until it has been settled whether you bought that out-



fit with Mr. Shaw's money or not; but you can use it to-night if you want to. Maybe the thing will be straightened up to-morrow."

"Where is Mr. Shaw?"

"He has gone to the hotel. Where are you takin' that load you got?"

"To Bloomfield."

"Well, you can't expect Mrs. Cobb to save tea for you. At any rate, I reckon she won't do no such thing."

"I shall have my supper in Bloomfield."

"You'll have to pay a quarter for it."

"I expect to."

"It's a waste of good money. Mrs. Cobb will get you somethin' to eat now if you'll give her that quarter. It's only right it should come to us. Are you goin' to turn over to me what you make?"

"We'll talk about that another time, Uncle Silas."

"I can look after any money you make better than you can yourself. You don't want to forget that I'm your guardian, and that if I think it's best to sell that horse and wagon that you claim to own the law will let me do it. The law is all on my side, so be careful that you don't get gay or somethin' might happen that you wouldn't like."

Mr. Cobb's words evidently veiled a threat, the meaning of which Bob could not fail to understand. His uncle intended to assert his authority, if Bob was found to be the rightful owner of the express route. He intended to demand an accounting of the business transacted each day, and would expect the boy to turn over to him every cent he collected from his patrons. Of course Bob had no intention of yielding to any such arrangement.

As he expected trouble, he decided to consult Mr. Shaw on the subject, as that gentleman seemed to be friendly toward him. With this idea in view he stopped at the small hotel and inquired for him. He learned that he had gone to Bloomfield on business. The business that took Mr. Shaw to Bloomfield was connected with the Widow Hazen. He wanted to inspect the bills that the lady had received from Bob. He could identify his own missing bills, therefore if the bills paid by the boy for the express business were not the bills in question, then Bob's story was true; if, on the contrary, Mr. Shaw recognized the bills received by Mrs. Hazen, then the boy had lied and he was guilty of the theft. That was Mr. Shaw's little plan by which he hoped to exonerate Bob, even if he failed to get a clue to his missing \$200.

When the gentleman reached the Hazen cottage he was disappointed to find that the widow had gone to Poughkeepsie that afternoon to visit her brother. A young sister of Mrs. Hazen's was in charge of the house.

"Did you see the money that Mrs. Hazen received for the sale of her late husband's express route?"

"Yes, sir."

"Can you describe the bills to me?"

"No, sir. All I remember is that there were four \$50 bills, and I think one of them had the name Manhattan National Bank on it."

This information was by no means conclusive, but it had two points against Bob--first that the

bills were \$50 ones, and second, that at least one of them was on the Manhattan National Bank.

"When do you expect Mrs. Hazen back?" he inquired.

"The day after to-morrow."

"Did she deposit the money in a savings bank before she went to Poughkeepsie?"

"No, sir; she took the money with her."

"It is a matter of the greatest importance that I should see those bills before she disposes of them. Can you tell me where she is stopping in Poughkeepsie?"

The young woman gave her brother's address. Mr. Shaw thanked her and left. He immediately went to a telegraph office and sent a message to Mrs. Hazen, care of her brother. Bob arrived in Bloomfield before dark and delivered his load of freight. He had done pretty well on his first day, and was delighted with his success. As soon as it became known that the express route was in the hands of a person who would conduct it along business lines he was satisfied he would get all the carrying he could handle. Bob had his supper at a restaurant. While eating he studied over his business plans for the future.

"If I'm going to carry out my running schedule as I have arranged it I've got to live at Bloomfield. It would only be a waste of time and energy to stay at Uncle Silas Cobb's place. I'd sooner pay my own way and get decent victuals and enough of them."

After supper he hunted up a small room, which he engaged to rent for a week. He paid down \$1 for the first week and took possession of it. He also found a place where he could keep his horse and wagon cheap. After an early breakfast at the restaurant he drove to different places in Bloomfield looking for stuff to carry either to Highland or to places in the immediate neighborhood. He caught two or three orders for nearby farms, and one for Newtown. After delivering them he found a letter at the post-office from a farmer whose place was a mile outside the village asking him to call.

He drove out to the farm and found eight crates of berries and several of vegetables that the farmer wanted delivered to the railroad company at Highland. Bob was glad to take the order, and his price for cartage was quite satisfactory to the shipper, who said he hoped the boy would make the business pay. The boy drove past the Cobb home without stopping and saw his uncle Silas harnessing up Bony to the wagon.

"I wonder where he is going?" Bob asked himself.

## CHAPTER XII.—Silas Cobb's Mission.

Silas Cobb was going to Bloomfield to call on the Widow Hazen. His errand was to find out if his nephew had really paid her \$200 for the express route. He could not understand how the boy could have done this, as the results of Bob's presumed theft was in his own pocket. Still, if it proved to be a fact, it would substantiate his ward's story that he had received \$225 from Mr. Fairchild, though it would not, in his mind, relieve Bob of the guilt of having taken Mr. Shaw's



\$200. Silas had received a curtain lecture from his wife the night before for not having insisted that Bob should be arrested and brought before the justice on the charge of stealing their visitor's money. Mrs. Cobb insisted that as long as the thief was at large, and the bills unrecovered, a certain onus would rest on the family.

Mr. Shaw might privately think that one of the family, and not Bob, had stolen the money from him. Silas Cobb therefore was in no pleasant humor when he hitched up Bony and started for Bloomfield. When he arrived at the Hazen cottage he of course learned that Mrs. Hazen was in Poughkeepsie. He wanted to know when she would return home, and was told she was expected the next day. Silas Cobb looked at Mrs. Hazen's sister thoughtfully.

"Do you know anything about the sale of the Hazen Express Route?" he asked her.

"I know my sister sold it to a boy named Robert Keane yesterday morning," was the reply.

"Do you know whether he paid her the \$200 she asked, or whether she let him have it on credit?"

"He paid her the \$200."

"Did you see him pay her?"

"Yes, sir."

Evidently Bob's story was true, then; but it was a puzzler to Mr. Cobb why the boy, with \$200 honestly acquired in his pocket, should then deliberately steal another \$200 for which he had no immediate use. Silas Cobb's attitude, taken in connection with the visit of Mr. Shaw the preceding afternoon on a similar errand, somewhat alarmed the young woman.

"Is there anything wrong about that money?" she inquired.

"Why do you ask?" replied Mr. Cobb, who was not prepared to say whether the money was right or not.

"Because you are the second gentleman who has called about the matter."

"The second gentleman!" ejaculated Silas, nervously.

"Yes, sir."

"Who was the other man?"

"He said his name was Mr. Shaw."

A shock went through the real estate man's frame. His visitor was evidently investigating the case on the quiet, and he didn't like to learn that.

"What did he want to know about the matter?" he asked, eagerly.

"He wanted me to describe the bills my sister received from the boy. He said it was of the utmost importance that he should know before she let them out of her hands."

"Did you describe them to him?" asked Mr. Cobb, anxiously.

"Not very well, sir, as I had taken very little notice of them. All I could tell him was that there were four \$50 bills——"

"Yes, sir," said Silas eagerly. "Four \$50 bills. What else?"

"And that one of them bore the name of the Manhattan National Bank."

"Only one of them?"

"I only noticed that one."

"Then you couldn't say whether the other three were also on the same bank?"

"No, sir."

"You say Mrs. Hazen is in Poughkeepsie?"

"Yes, sir."

"If I went to Poughkeepsie do you think I could see her?"

"I will give you my brother's address and you could call there. I am sure you would find her."

"Very well; let me have it."

Mr. Cobb wrote the direction down in his notebook.

"Did you, ahem! give her address to this Mr. Shaw?"

"Yes, sir. He asked for it."

That was another shock to the real estate man. Mr. Shaw had stolen a march upon him, and he might already have seen the widow Hazen, or be even then on his way to see her. He hastily took his leave of Mrs. Hazen's sister with the intention of losing no time in going to Poughkeepsie. He hoped the lady had either banked the money or otherwise disposed of it, for he was more than ever anxious that Bob should not be able to establish his innocence. If he found that Mrs. Hazen still had the bills about her, and had not yet seen Mr. Shaw, he would represent to her how foolish it was to carry so much money around and suggest that she bank it at once in Poughkeepsie.

While he was following out this line of thought some evil spirit whispered a brand-new suggestion into his willing ear. If Mrs. Hazen had the four \$50 bills, why couldn't he, while pretending to examine them, substitute the four \$50 bills which he had taken from the boy's trousers? He knew they were the bills his late visitor had lost, for Mr. Shaw had described them perfectly, while he asserted that he had a record of their numbers in his memorandum book. Unless the widow's bills were new ones, which would block his little game, she would never notice the substitution. Then he would impress on her the necessity of retaining them in her possession by hinting strongly that the money was believed to have been stolen by the boy who bought the route and that the bills might have to be shown in court.

"It's a splendid scheme," said Silas Cobb to himself, rubbing his skinny hands together with great satisfaction. "It's a splendid scheme, and I'll work it if she has the bills and Mr. Shaw hasn't yet called upon her. It will relieve me of the risk of getting rid of four bills which can be identified, while at the same time it will fasten the guilt on that young rascal."

It was a contemptible piece of business, though worthy of such a man as Silas Cobb. The only excuse for it he could have offered was that he honestly believed Bob had stolen the money in the first place and ought to be punished for his crime. He was simply aiding justice to accomplish its rightful mission.

As Mr. Cobb drove down Main street to Newtown, before stopping at his home to inform his wife that he was bound for Poughkeepsie on important business, he thought he would stop at the hotel and see if he could get a line on Mr. Shaw's movements that morning. He found that the gentleman had left the hotel after breakfast without leaving word as to where he was going.

"He's surely gone to Poughkeepsie to see that woman," gritted the real estate man uneasily. "I'm afraid he'll get there before I will. In that case my little scheme will go to waste. It's a



shame to think that that boy may be able to evade the consequences he so richly deserves."

With this charitable feeling toward his nephew in his heart he drove on.

### CHAPTER XIII.—A Fight To A Finish.

Bob Keane picked up several more crates of berries on his road to Highland, where he turned his load over to the railroad company for shipment to New York. He then drove around the neighborhood and found that there would be nothing in his line until the afternoon.

"I s'pose I ought to return empty to Bloomfield in order to follow out my schedule, but I don't like the idea of doing that. I guess I'll let the schedule slide to-day. I'm hardly started yet in the business. I think I'd better run over to Poughkeepsie and see if I can't drum up some trade among those people who sell goods to the Bloomfield merchants. It will fill in time, and perhaps widen the scope of my operations."

Bob obtained permission to put his horse and wagon in a nearby shed till he returned from across the river. It was about this time that Silas Cobb drove into Highland. He put his team up at a small stable and walked down to the landing. As he was crossing the tracks near the station he came face to face with Bob.

When one contemplates inflicting an injury on another person his feelings towards his victim is not usually of a very pleasant kind. It was so with Mr. Cobb. He was on the road to Poughkeepsie with the express purpose of trying to fasten the guilt of the \$200 theft on his nephew, and in so doing he was trying to persuade himself that he was performing a duty that he owed to the community.

"Let no guilty man escape," was his motto.

He was satisfied Bob was guilty, therefore the boy ought to be exposed and punished. He had also worked himself up to the fever pitch of righteous indignation over Bob's action in buying out the express route without first consulting him. The boy clearly proposed to break loose from his guiding strings. He had as good as said that he was tired of the way things were going, and meant to alter them to suit himself. This was rank rebellion, and Mr. Cobb did not propose to stand for it. He had no objection to Bob running the route if he handed all his receipts over to him; but it looked very much as though his nephew had no intention of doing this. The boy had actually squandered money on a supper, breakfast and bed at Bloomfield when he ought to have come home and paid that money over to him (Cobb).

Bob had carried a big load of stuff from Highland Station to Bloomfield, not to speak of the crates of berries which Mr. Cobb had learned that he carried from the Griswold farm to the station; therefore the boy must have a tidy sum of money in his clothes at the present moment which he would undoubtedly squander on more dinners, suppers and breakfasts, as well as beds, unless his legal guardian stepped in and prevented such a sacrilege. Mr. Cobb therefore was

fully resolved to lie in wait for the boy, after he returned home from Poughkeepsie, and get whatever money Bob had in his pockets away from him. And he proposed to repeat that process on subsequent occasions if his nephew managed to keep out of jail. If Bob still persisted in living away from home, and hid his money, then Mr. Cobb proposed to take the horse and wagon away from him and sell it, as he understood he had a perfect right to do.

Silas Cobb was thinking of his designs on his nephew at the very moment he ran into him at the station. His face wore a savage look, the very intensity of which startled the boy. The encounter was a surprise to both, but did not prevent Mr. Cobb from grasping Bob by the collar and dragging him into the waiting-room of the station.

"Now, you young villain," exclaimed Mr. Cobb, "I want you to give an account of yourself. Why didn't you come home last night?"

"Because it was more convenient for my business to stay at Bloomfield," answered the boy, who then jerked himself out of his uncle's hands and retreated to the other side of a small table covered with time-tables, and on which also stood a fair-sized package.

"It was, eh?" roared the now thoroughly aroused real estate man. "Well, I want you to understand that I won't have no such didoes as that. You had to spend somethin' for a bed and for your supper, as well as for your breakfast this mornin', didn't you?"

"I did," replied Bob, calmly.

"A rank waste of good money," groaned the miserly old man. "You would have saved all that by comin' home. How much did it cost you?"

"One dollar for a room——"

"One dollar for a room!" howled Mr. Cobb, dismayed at what he considered the extravagant price.

"Not for one night, but for a whole week," replied Bob, feeling almost like laughing at the expression on his guardian's face.

"Do you mean to tell me that you hired a room for a week?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then when you return to Bloomfield this afternoon you'll go right back to that place and tell them to refund you the rest of the money, as you don't intend to stay there no more."

"But I do intend to stay there right along," answered Bob sturdily.

"Don't tell me what you're goin' to do, you young rascal. You'll do as I say, d'ye understand? I'm your guardian, and what I say goes."

Bob thought it wise to make no reply to this outburst.

"You brought a load of fruit and vegetables to town yesterday, and took back a big load of general stuff, didn't you?"

"That's right," nodded the boy.

"You might just as well tell the truth, for I know all about what you're doin'," said Mr. Cobb, nodding his head energetically. "Well, you got paid for your haulin', didn't you?"

"I did."

"And you've got the money in your pocket now, haven't you, less what you squandered on your stomach and a bed?"

"Yes, sir," replied Bob, truthfully.



"How much money have you got now?"

Bob pulled out a roll of bills and began to count them. Mr. Cobb's eyes fairly stuck out of his head as he watched the boy. He seemed to be fairly made of money. He couldn't wait for Bob to count the money, but gasped out hungrily:

"You didn't get all that money for carryin' stuff yesterday."

"No, sir."

"Then where did you get it? Have you been robbing some other man, you villain?"

"No, sir. I haven't robbed any one so far that I know of."

"You stole that two hundred dollars from Mr. Shaw, and I know you did."

"You seem very sure about it."

"I am. You tucked it away in your pants' pocket after you took it, and if it hadn't been for——"

Then Mr. Cobb shut up like a clam, for he suddenly realized he was saying too much.

"If it hadn't been for what, Uncle Silas?" asked the boy, eyeing him strangely.

"None of your business. You stole the money, but we haven't yet been able to prove it agin you. P'raps we will before long," shaking his head meaningly.

"I never stole a dollar from any one in my life," asserted Bob, indignantly.

"I don't intend to argue the matter with you here. I want to know now where you got all that money."

"Mr. Fairchild made me a present of most of it—twenty-five dollars in fact—to buy a suit of clothes."

"He did?" with a sneer. "Seems to me Mr. Fairchild is uncommonly liberal with his money."

"He offered me five hundred dollars, but I refused it."

"You refused five hundred dollars!" gasped his guardian, hardly believing the evidence of his senses.

"I did. I don't take pay for such a service as I rendered him."

"You said yesterday that he gave you two hundred dollars and that you spent it for that express route."

"He loaned me two hundred dollars. It was only on those terms I would accept the money."

Mr. Cobb looked at Bob as if he was some new species of the human family. This boy had actually refused to accept \$500 as a gift, but had accepted \$200 as a loan. It was simply incomprehensible to him. The sight of the roll of bills in Bob's hand, however, recalled his thoughts to the business in hand.

"Hand over that money to me," he said sharply, reaching across the table with the talon-like fingers in all eagerness to grasp it.

Bob drew back and returned the bills to his pocket.

"I'm going to use a good part of that money to buy a suit of clothes," he said.

"You're goin' to do nothin' of the kind. You don't want no clothes."

"I need them, all right. I'm using my best suit now for every day."

"You won't use them no longer when you get home to-night. You'll put on your other clothes.

What d'ye think Mrs. Cobb would say if she knowed you was wrastlin' with boxes and packages and crates with them best clothes of yours?"

"I don't care what she'd say. This suit is none too good for every day."

"Are you goin' to hand that money over to me, or shall I take it from you?" demanded Silas Cobb, fiercely, making a move to get around the table.

"I don't think either will happen," retorted Bob, rather defiantly.

"You don't, eh? Then I'll show, you, you young villain!"

With that Mr. Cobb, with unusual agility, sprang around the table after the boy. Bob had no idea of being caught, so he made a dash to escape around the other end of the table. He would easily have got away if he hadn't stumbled. Before he could recover himself his uncle had him by the collar once more.

"Let me go, Uncle Silas!" cried Bob, backing up against the side of the table.

"I'll let you go when I've got that money," replied Mr. Cobb in a tense tone, trying to get his disengaged hand into the boy's pocket.

Bob was alarmed for the thirty-odd dollars he possessed, for he knew if his guardian once got his fingers on it he might as well say good-by to it. While he was quite willing to concede his uncle's legal right to take care of his money, he did not care to let him enjoy that right if he could prevent it. It might be law for his guardian to take his property, but under the circumstances it would not be justice. So he put up a mighty game fight in its defence. He did not intend to go back and live at Mr. Cobb's home, because from past experience he knew only too well what kind of treatment he might expect to receive there.

Ever since he came under the Cobb roof-tree he had been half-fed and half-clothed, in spite of the fact that he was heir to \$10,000. That programme would be continued in the event that he yielded to his uncle's demands, but he didn't intend to yield. To maintain himself in independence he needed money. If Mr. Cobb deprived him of that he would be helpless. Therefore he fought tooth and nail to prevent him from doing so.

Silas Cobb was equally determined to have his own way. The sight of so much money in his nephew's hands had roused his cupidity to the boiling-point. He would have it if he half-choked the boy in order to get it. Mr. Cobb was not a very powerful man, as he was small and spare in stature; but when his passions were aroused, as on the present occasion, he was a dangerous opponent for a boy like Bob.

The boy's back was against the table, and in his desperate efforts to release himself he had doubled himself up under it. When Mr. Cobb bent down to get at his pocket, Bob tried to squirm out of his grasp, and when he discovered that he couldn't do that he tried to rise up, whereupon his uncle gave him a violent shove, which resulted in unfortunate consequences—the table tipped over and everything upon it slipped off on the floor. This so far as the time-tables were concerned amounted to nothing; but the package, which had been standing on the table, was a horse of another color. It struck the boards with a crash.



split open and spread the fractured parts of an elegant table lamp for several feet around. At that moment the owner of the package appeared on the scene.

He saw the ruin of his property and fairly gasped with rage. He was a big man, too, and consequently presented a formidable appearance. Rushing forward, he seized Mr. Cobb, who had let go of Bob, by the arms and shook him violently, as a terrier might a rat.

"What do you mean by upsetting that table and breaking my lamp?" he demanded furiously of the real estate man.

"I—I——" gasped the frightened Silas.

"Pay me for it at once, or I'll hand you over to an officer. Pay me twenty dollars instantly or to jail you go."

Bob took advantage of the situation to make good his escape.

#### CHAPTER XIV.—Caught In His Own Trap.

A number of people were attracted to the waiting-room of the station by the racket. The owner of the broken lamp was so mad that he had very little mercy on the hapless real estate man. He started to drag him to the station door when several of the newcomers interfered, saying that it was a shame for a big man like him to intimidate a small person like Mr. Cobb, who looked pale and frightened.

"But look at my lamp!" exclaimed the irate man. "A twenty dollar lamp gone to blazes, and all this man's fault."

"No, no!" whined Silas Cobb. "It wasn't my fault. It was the boy's."

"What boy?" asked several. "There's no boy here."

"He ran away after pushing the table over."

"You mean after you pushed him against the table," growled the man whose lamp had been smashed. "Are you going to pay for that lamp or are you not?" he cried threateningly.

Silas would sooner have risked a beating than have parted with one of his darling dollars. Seeing an opening in the small crowd, he made a sudden break for the door.

"Stop him!" roared the man, starting in pursuit.

No one, however, made any attempt to stop Mr. Cobb, who flew for the ferryboat, which was on the point of putting out. He succeeded in reaching her just in time to get aboard, while the big man was shut out. Shaking with fear, he made his way to the other end of the boat, and there he remained until the boat reached the other side of the river and glided into her slip, when he went ashore and walked up the street, much relieved to know that he had shaken off his formidable antagonist. He consulted his notebook for the address of the house where Mrs. Hazen was stopping, and then asked a policeman he met to direct him to the street. The officer pointed out a street car and told him to take that and ask the conductor to let him off at the nearest corner of the street mentioned. He followed these directions to the letter, as he

was a very careful man, and in a short time he was ringing the bell at the address given him.

It happened that at the time Mr. Cobb came up the steps Mrs. Hazen was engaged with another visitor—namely, Mr. Kenwick Shaw. Mr. Shaw had come over on the boat ahead of the real estate man; consequently he reached Mrs. Hazen's brother's abode half an hour ahead of Mr. Cobb. He explained his mission to the widow, and as she still had the bills in her possession that she received from Bob Keane, she got them for Mr. Shaw to look at. He saw at once, and to his credit we will say, much to his satisfaction, that the four fifties were not the bills he had lost. One of them was on the Manhattan National, of New York; the others on different banks of other cities—the most noticeable being the First National of Albany on account of the red cross on its back. The widow had watched the examination of the bills with some anxiety.

"Is there anything the matter with this money, sir?" she asked nervously.

"No, madam, the bills are perfectly good. The fact of the matter is that four fifty-dollar bills were stolen from me, and the boy who paid this money to you was accused of the theft. I came here to see if I could identify those bills as the ones I lost. Though I really can't afford to lose two hundred dollars, still I am bound to say that I am glad those are not my bills, for I have taken a liking to young Keane, and I would not like to discover that he really was the thief. He says he got the bills he gave you from a rich gentleman named Fairbanks, to whom he rendered a signal service, and it seems evident that he told the truth."

"I remember he told me that he saved the life of the gentleman's daughter," said Mrs. Hazen.

"That's quite true, madam. He is a brave lad and an enterprising one, too. I am very much obliged to you for your kindness in permitting me to look at these bills," he said, handing them back to her. "I will now take my leave."

As he rose to go he happened to glance out of the window, and to his great astonishment he saw Silas Cobb walking up the steps to the front door.

"What has brought him here?" Mr. Shaw asked himself. "It must be that he, too, has come to get a look at these bills. If he expects to criminate his nephew with them he'll be greatly mistaken. Madam," he said, turning to the widow, who was about to answer the ring, "if I mistake not this visitor has come on the same errand as myself. As he is the boy's uncle, and not favorably disposed to him, I should like to be present at your interview with him, but without his knowledge."

The widow hesitated, but finally pointed to the tapestry curtains which separated the little parlor from the room beyond.

"You may stand behind those, sir. I trust I am doing right in permitting you to do this."

"You may place every confidence in me, madam," said Mr. Shaw (hurrying to conceal himself).

A moment or two later the widow ushered Silas Cobb into the parlor.

"My name is Cobb, ma'am—Silas Cobb, of Newtown."



The widow bowed and asked her visitor to be seated.

"I have called in relation to the sale of your late husband's express business to my nephew, Robert Keane. You see, ma'am, the night before you sold the horse and wagon to him a visitor I had stoppin' at my house was robbed of four fifty-dollar bills. He slept in the same room with the boy, and Mrs. Cobb and me is afeard that our nephew took the money out of his clothes, for it can't be found nowhere about the room. It is a very suspicious circumstance, ma'am, that next mornin' the boy goes to you and buys your husband's business for the identical sum that the gentleman lost."

The widow acknowledge that the circumstances looked suspicious.

"What is the name of the gentleman who lost the money?"

"His name, ma'am, is Kenwick Shaw. He ain't been here, has he, to look at the bills?"

This was somewhat of an embarrassing question for the widow to answer under the circumstances, and in order to avoid answering it she pretended to see something out of the window.

When she returned to her chair Mr. Cobb did not repeat the question, much to her relief, taking it for granted that Mr. Shaw had not yet showed up.

"I hope your nephew didn't steal the money," she said, with apparent concern.

"I'm afraid, ma'am, that he did," said Mr. Cobb, with a solemn look. "It is very sad to think that a boy of his, I might almost say, tender years should be guilty of such a wicked deed. Mrs. Cobb and me have brought him up with the best of care; but it ain't our fault if he has turned out bad. He is a most ungrateful boy, and I reckon ingratitude is the worse sin on the calendar. Have you got them bills the boy paid you, Mrs. Hazen?"

"Yes, sir. Do you wish to examine them?"

"Yes, ma'am; I shall look upon it as a favor if you will let me see them."

The widow produced them from her pocket-book.

"I suppose you have examined these bills carefully, ma'am, and know what banks they're on?" asked the wily old miser, as he adjusted his glasses upon his nose.

"No, sir; I only looked at the figures."

"Hum!" ejaculated Mr. Cobb, spreading out the bills on his knee. "Would you mind raising that blind a bit, ma'am?"

Mrs. Hazen complied with his request, and the instant her back was turned the artful old rascal quickly substituted the four stolen fifties for the ones the widow had received from Bob. He made the change in a pretty slick manner, but as the concealed Mr. Shaw was looking directly at him when he did it he saw the whole thing.

"So," muttered the gentleman behind the curtains, "it is just as I suspected. Mr. Cobb was the thief himself, and is now trying to fix the guilt on his ward. The contemptible rascal! It is mighty lucky for both Bob and myself that I managed to anticipate Mr. Cobb's visit here."

"Well, ma'am, I can't say positively that these are the identical bills that Mr. Shaw lost," said Silas, hypocritically; "but I believe they are. However I dare say the gentleman himself will

be over here shortly and will be able to identify them perfectly. In the interest of justice, ma'am, you must hold them for the present. If my nephew should be arrested, as I consider probable, these bills will have to be produced in court."

"But I wish to change one of these bills to-day. I want to use the money," she said.

"You must not do it, ma'am. It might enable my nephew to escape his just deserts."

"You seem anxious to have the boy punished," said the widow, in an indignant tone. "I should think that, as his uncle, you would rather wish to screen him."

"Justice must be done, ma'am, though the heavens fall," said Mr. Cobb, sanctimoniously.

"Well, sir, I must say that Robert Keane does not look like a thief. I think you may find that you are wrongfully suspecting him."

"I think not, ma'am. The evidence all points to him. It will be conclusive if them bills he paid you are the same ones that Mr. Shaw lost."

"I hope the really guilty person will be discovered," said Mrs. Hazen.

"I hope so, ma'am, with all my heart," coincided Silas Cobb.

"You shall have your wish, Mr. Cobb," said Mr. Shaw, stepping from behind the curtains. "I accuse you of the theft of my two hundred dollars, and I think I shall have no difficulty in bringing the matter home to you."

## CHAPTER XV.—Under Mr. Shaw's Thumb.

To say that Silas Cobb was fairly paralyzed by the unexpected appearance of his late visitor would not exaggerate the situation. He stared at Mr. Shaw with open mouth and starting eyes. His tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, and he could not utter a sound to save his life. Mr. Shaw regarded the miserly old man with silent contempt for a moment or two, then he spoke, while the widow Hazen looked at them both with surprised attention.

"You're a nice man to be the guardian of a decent boy, upon my word you are. You ought to be arrested for conspiracy in attempting to fasten the crime of theft upon an innocent lad. However, I shall have you arrested for stealing my two hundred dollars, and I think that will answer just as well."

"What—what!" gasped Silas Cobb, turning white and trembling in every limb. "Have me arrested for stealin' your money?"

"Most decidedly."

"You're crazy!"

"Am I?" smiled Mr. Shaw, sardonically. "Mrs. Hazen, will you please look at those bills you hold in your hand and tell me if they are the same ones you showed me a little while ago?"

The widow, who had no suspicion of the substitution so cleverly accomplished by Mr. Cobb while her back was turned, obeyed Mr. Shaw's request with some surprise.

"These bills are different," said the widow.

"How do you know they are different?"

"Because they are all on the one bank, while those I showed you were on different banks, and



one of them had a cross in red ink on it. I don't understand——"

"Of course you don't understand, madam, because you didn't see the bit of sleight-of-hand that this man performed when you went to raise the blind at his request. He substituted four other bills for the four you received from Bob Keane, and the four he substituted are the four that were stolen from me in his house."

"It's a lie," whined Mr. Cobb.

"Is it? Mrs. Hazen, I want you to witness the fact that I identify the four bills that you now hold as the four that belong to me and to make the identification complete," taking his memorandum book from his pocket, "I will read off the running numbers on each of those bills."

Whereupon he read the numbers, at the same time requesting the widow to note if the numbers he read corresponded with those on the bills, and she admitted that they did in each particular.

"Now, Mr. Cobb, you will please produce the four bills that Mrs. Hazen showed you when you asked her to let you examine the bills that your nephew paid her for the express route."

Silas Cobb, though driven hard and fast into a corner, did not want to comply.

"If you don't do as I say I will send for a policeman and place you under immediate arrest."

Mr. Cobb then brought forth the bills, and Mrs. Hazen identified them as the ones she had received from Bob Keane.

"Now, Mr. Cobb," said Mr. Shaw, "what have you to say for yourself?"

"I didn't steal your money," he said in quavering tones. "I took them bills of yours from my nephew's pockets on the night you was robbed."

"That's a very pretty story, indeed," replied Mr. Shaw, incredulously. "Do you think a jury would believe that in the face of the circumstantial evidence against you? Not on your life."

"But it is the truth!" cried Mr. Cobb, so earnestly that his accuser decided to ask him to explain his side of the case.

Then Mr. Cobb, with many protestations of his innocence, told his story as the reader knows it. Mr. Shaw listened to it patiently and felt that the man might be telling the truth.

"You say you took those bills from Bob Keane's trousers?" he asked.

"I did."

"How do you know that those trousers belonged to your nephew? Might they not have been your son's trousers? The boys were sleeping together and their clothes were not far apart."

Silas Cobb was not a little startled at this suggestion. Such a contingency had not occurred to him before.

"My son wouldn't steal your money," he replied doggedly.

"How do you know he wouldn't?" asked Mr. Shaw shortly. "Are you willing to go into court and swear that those trousers you handled were your nephew's?"

Mr. Cobb hemmed and hawed, and finally admitted that he couldn't swear to that fact.

"Your son is the guilty one, you can take my word for it. I saw him looking at me when I was counting the money, while Bob Keane seemed to be asleep. It seems plain to me just how the case is. Your son stole my money and put it

in his trousers, intending to hide it in the morning. After he fell asleep you came upstairs, as you have described, went to the boys' bed, picked up the wrong trousers, found the money you supposed Bob had received from Mr. Fairchild, and carried it away with you. On the strength of that you have believed your nephew guilty. Why didn't you tell me all this in the morning; then this trouble would have been avoided. No, you thought you saw the chance to keep my \$200 yourself by throwing suspicion on your nephew. But the most contemptible part of all is your act of calling here on Mrs. Hazen for the purpose of changing the bills, so that when I saw them later I would naturally identify them as the ones I lost. Fortunately, I was ahead of you, and your miserable scheme has reacted upon yourself."

Silas Cobb was overwhelmed by the situation he now found himself in. He looked as mean as he felt, and had nothing to say in his own defense.

"Now look here, Mr. Cobb, I'm going to have a talk with Bob Keane. It's my opinion he's not over-anxious to have you continue as his guardian—certainly, after your present conduct, I think you are an unfit person to have charge of his property. If I find he is really disposed to cut loose from you, I am going to help him do so."

"You can't do nothin'," snarled the real estate man. "I'm his guardian accordin' to law, and I'm goin' to remain so."

"Now just listen to reason a moment, Mr. Cobb. All Bob will have to do is to petition the Probate Court to remove you as his guardian and appoint another. He can make his own selection, and if the court approves of the person he will be appointed in your place. I have no doubt but Mr. Fairchild, being grateful to the boy for saving his daughter, will accept the trust, and he is evidently a proper person, you will have to admit."

Mr. Cobb remained silent and dejected. He was no fool, and easily perceived the force of Mr. Shaw's remarks. But it was a terrible blow to him to contemplate giving up the profits he was earning out of the boy. He wanted to fight against it tooth and nail, but Mr. Shaw had him where the hair was short, and could expose him to the contempt of the community in which he lived if he opposed the plan.

"What are you goin' to do about your \$200?" he asked sulkily.

"That depends on yourself. If you make no further trouble for Bob I'll agree to let the whole matter drop just where it is. I have my money back. I'll let you make your commission on the farm, which I have about decided to buy, and no one outside of Bob, Mrs. Hazen and myself will be any wiser as to your conduct in this matter. Is that a bargain?"

Much against his will, Silas Cobb agreed to the condition.

"For fear you might change your mind I'm going to have all these bills fully identified before a notary, and I shall also take a sworn statement of the circumstances from Mrs. Hazen. I guess that will hold you down pretty tight. I think that is all now, so we will not detain you any longer."

Mr. Cobb took up his hat, and, without a word,



left the house a sadder and wiser man than he entered it. He proceeded straight to the ferry and boarded a boat for Highland.

## CHAPTER XVI.—The Success of An Honest Boy.

Bob Keane reached Poughkeepsie on the boat ahead of Silas Cobb, and immediately started to look up the few customers who had occasionally patronized the late Mr. Hazen's country express. The boy interviewed them all, and impressed them with his business-like ways and progressive ideas. He received enough encouragement to feel satisfied that his trip across the river had not been wasted. The ferryboat was on the point of leaving her slip for Highland when Bob rushed on board. In his eagerness to reach the front of the boat he began pushing his way through the crowd at the entrance to the men's cabin. It sometimes happens that "the more haste, the less speed." It was so in the present case. In his hurry Bob didn't notice that somebody had laid a small, heavy, japanned box on the deck. His foot caught on it and he stumbled headlong against a small, spare old maid whose back was toward him.

"I beg your pardon," began Bob, as he picked himself up. "I didn't——"

Then he stopped short aghast, for he was face to face with the one man of all others he least desired to meet at that moment—his guardian, Silas Cobb.

"You young rascal!" exclaimed his miserly relative. "You did that on purpose. You want to kill me, you little villain!"

He looked so aggressive and sour that Bob thought it was the part of wisdom to get out of his way. As he drew back Silas made a grab at him, with some purpose in his mind. The boy, believing his uncle intended to get back at him for the trouble in the station waiting-room, turned as quick as a flash and darted back the same way he had come. Silas Cobb, cane upraised, followed in full chase. The boat had already started out of the slip, but Bob, measuring the intervening space with his eyes, took a flying leap and landed safely with both feet on the dock. Mr. Cobb stood behind the iron guard rail and shook his cane at the boy as the boat receded from the dock; but Bob didn't mind that exhibition for a cent now that his guardian couldn't reach him. The boy hung around the neighborhood until the boat returned from Highland, when he boarded her and in due time reached the other side of the river.

Before he landed he cast a wary eye around, thinking his uncle might be on the watch for him. He saw no sign of him and hurried ashore. He went to the place where he had left his horse and drove to the store, the owner of which had engaged him to take a load of furniture to a house on the suburbs of Bloomfield. The employees of the establishment loaded the stuff on his wagon in the most approved fashion that would economize space, and then Bob started for his destination in good spirits. Before he had gone very far he was overtaken by Mr. Shaw, who was driving a rig which he had hired in Newtown. The gentleman told Bob that the stolen money matter had been fully cleared up, that he had got

his \$200 back, but he would enter into no explanation just then. He made an engagement with the boy to call on him at the hotel in Newtown that evening, when he said he would make everything clear to him. After Bob had had his supper he walked in to Newtown to keep his engagement.

"Now, Bob," said Mr. Shaw, "do you wish to remain under Mr. Cobb's control?"

"No, sir," replied the boy emphatically. "He threatened to-day to take my horse and wagon away from me and sell it unless I gave him every cent I took in."

"Then I will assist you in the matter of a new guardian. When do you expect to see Mr. Fairchild?"

"I expect he and his daughter will return to Jordan's in a week."

"Then we will let the thing stand until we can speak to him about it. I am sure he will take a great interest in your future welfare."

Four days later Mr. Fairchild and Fanny came back to the farmhouse, and the girl welcomed Bob like a brother, and as the truest of friends. Bob introduced Mr. Shaw to Mr. Fairchild, and then the lad's future was fully discussed, with the result that at the next session of the Probate Court Silas Cobb was removed and Mr. William Fairchild appointed Bob's guardian, a change that the boy relished greatly. Keane's Express Route acquired an enviable reputation and became a very profitable business under Bob's skilful management, so much so indeed that he had to put a second wagon on before the summer was over, which wagon was driven by Dan Griswold, who preferred that work to farming. Bob purchased Bony from Cobb, fed him up and made a new horse out of him, and we have no doubt but the animal felt an equine gratitude to the boy as long as he lived.

During the ensuing winter Bob arranged with Dan to carry on the route for him, for one wagon could attend to all the carrying during cold weather. Bob himself went to New York and attended school there. He lived at the Fairchild home near Central Park until late in the spring, when the increasing business of his express route called him back to Ulster County. That summer Fanny spent altogether at Jordan's, so as to be near the boy she had learned to think a great deal of. This is Bob's third season with his express, and he is doing finer than ever, having quite a comfortable bank account in Bloomfield. He is eighteen years old, and a fine, handsome young man. Fanny is proud to be seen in his company, and thinks there is not another boy in the world who can hold a candle to him. Unless she should change her mind in the near future it seems pretty certain that Bob will eventually handle a big share of the Fairchild money through Fanny.

Next week's issue will contain "AFTER A FORTUNE; or, THE PLUCKIEST BOY IN THE WEST."

There was fire in the eye of the crusty old millionaire. "So you want to marry my daughter? And may I ask, young man, whether you have any prospects?" "I have excellent ones, sir." "And what are they?" "The prospects of marrying your daughter."



## CURRENT NEWS

### CATCHING TROUT IN HATS

The Fraser River, British Columbia, is alive with oolichans or candle fish, and the Dolly Varden trout are coming to the surface in such quantities that the fishermen can catch them in their hats from the sides of their boats.

These trout feed on the oolichans, and when they are full come to the surface and float there for a while, going with the current instead of against it as is their custom.

Oolichans are so full of oil that the trout become very fat after the small fish arrive in the river.

### IMMENSE HAIL FALLS

A phenomenon occurred when chunks of ice, weighing from one pound to one-and-one-half pounds fell for a period of twenty-five minutes, with not the slightest sign of rain and the sun shining most of the time. The large hail stones fell from a large cloud that passed over the city, and it had traversed some distance before the hail began to fall, showing that they had come a great distance. One of the stones weighed two

pounds. Some of the large hail stones were measured and they ranged from 15 to 18 inches in circumference.

After the large hail ceased falling a heavy rain and hail storm followed, the like of which old timers said they had never seen before. Many Mexicans believed the world was coming to an end, and scores of them were found in their homes crying and praying.

### ST. JOHN DRY DOCK TO HAVE WORLD'S LARGEST CAISSONS

The North of Ireland Shipbuilding Company has just completed at Londonderry, Ireland, one of the two largest caissons in the world. This they have built for the St. John Dry Dock and Shipbuilding Company, whose masonry dry dock, 1,150 feet long, 140 feet wide at the entrance, and with a depth of water over the sill of 42 feet, was recently opened and in full operation. The new caisson has six completed docks. When the other caisson is completed two ships 600 feet long can be accommodated.

## BOYS, READ THIS

DO YOU KNOW THERE'S A DANDY DETECTIVE-STORY PUBLICATION ON THE NEWSSTANDS EVERY TWO WEEKS, ENTITLED

### "MYSTERY MAGAZINE?"

It contains 64 pages of good solid reading matter — the kind of stories that grip you like a vise and hold your eyes on the type from the beginning to the end of each yarn. No. 158 is out! Why don't you get a copy and read

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The short stories are "THE RENT IN THE WARP," "THE UNWELCOME LESSON," "THE GIRL IN THE CASE," "THE INEVITABLE," "THE BREATH OF SUSPICION," "THE MUTILATED CLUE."

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**Buy a Copy and Read It — You Will Be Pleased!**



# Rob and the Reporters

— Or, —

## Hustling for War News by Wireless

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story.)

### CHAPTER V.—(Continued).

At five o'clock next morning a messenger put in an appearance and handed Rob two sealed packets so prepared that they could easily be hidden on his person, also a pass for himself and attendant through the British lines.

An hour later the Isabel sailed.

The passage to Rotterdam was quickly performed and without mishap.

And now Rob could not but congratulate himself upon Walter's companionship, for the young Bostonian spoke both French and German sufficiently well to make himself understood, as did Edith, while our hero knew only his mother tongue.

They went to a hotel and found no difficulty in engaging rooms.

Next morning Rob and Walter started out to look up an automobile, and purchased a second-hand car in good condition at what seemed under the circumstances a reasonable price.

"It seems as if everything had been made singularly easy for us," declared Edith, when they returned and told her, but Rob looked rather grave when he replied that he feared their troubles were yet to come.

"We are liable to have the car taken from us the moment we cross the Belgian frontier," he said; "the man we bought it of gave us no encouragement that it would be otherwise. There is worse still."

"Bless me!" cried Edith, "what now? Out with the worst, Rob."

"It seems that there are two towns called Durelle in Belgium; the one just over the frontier is not the one in which the sanitarium where your mother is staying is located."

"Are you sure?"

"The auto man was positive. He says he has been in both, and knows Doctor Papineau, the proprietor, personally. I'm afraid there can be no mistake."

"And where is the other Durelle?"

Away beyond Brussels in the very region where the fighting is now going on."

Edith turned pale.

"My poor mother!" she exclaimed. "Then there is no telling what may have happened to her?"

"I'm afraid it's so," replied Rob. "I hated to tell you. We shall have to pass directly through the danger zone."

"And we can't go to Brussels by train?"

"Oh, no! No civilians are allowed on the few trains which are running. It will be impossible."

"And I am taking you boys out of your way and keeping you from your work," sighed Edith.

"There you are wrong," replied Rob. "You know I told you that my orders were to open one of those packets when I reached Rotterdam. I did so last night and found a letter addressed to myself, giving me the location of General Taylor's corps. We shall have to pass through the very section in which the right Durelle is located in order to get there."

"And when do we start?"

"It is up to you, Edith. We are ready at any time."

"What in the world shall we do if we lost the car, Rob?"

"The best we can. Personally I advise you to remain in Rotterdam or to return on the yacht to London."

"Do you really mean it?"

"I really mean it. I consider the risk altogether too great."

"So do I," added Walter, gravely. "If you were a sister of mine I should positively forbid it."

"Perhaps your sister wouldn't mind you, then!" flashed Edith. "I'm going—that's all there is to it, boys. I'm ready to start whenever you say the word."

With this, she went into her own room and shut the door.

"By Jove! I admire her spunk," said Walter.

"I told you how it would be," replied Rob. "Edith is not one of the kind to be turned from her purpose on account of danger."

"She certainly is one fine girl," assented Walter, looking Rob squarely in the eyes. "You think so, too?"

Rob reddened as he replied:

"Indeed, I do."

"Say, old man, I'm going to ask you a personal question. Answer or not, as you please," Walter said.

"Well?"

"Do you love her? There are times when I have thought so."

Rob hesitated.

"Oh, you needn't answer if you don't want to. It's none of my business, of course."

"It isn't that," replied Rob. "I have become very much attached to Edith, I will admit, but I don't know that it means that I actually love her. Where would be the use in allowing myself to fall in love? I am only a poor reporter; she is a wealthy heiress, according to Mr. Torrence, and I have no doubt he told the youth. Besides, it is only a matter of a few days, under any circumstances, when we shall part, probably never to meet again."

"Well, that's so," assented Walter; "all the same, you have dodged the question"

He was wrong. Rob had spoken precisely as he felt.

He had certainly grown very fond of Edith, but he was not willing to admit even to himself that he was in love.

The boys talked it over, and it was decided to start at four in the afternoon and cross the Belgian frontier just after dark.

The guide book was now most carefully studied.

(To be continued.)



## GOOD READING

## DOCTORS' PAY IN OLD DAYS

Bird cages and tin pans in exchange for medical treatment in the early days in Kansas seems to have been one method used by physicians in collecting their bills. In some old records in the Probate Court vaults an account was found filled by a former prominent doctor of McPherson, Kan., long deceased. The account was for medical treatment from Dec. 26, 1837, to Jan. 1, 1838, for which a charge of \$4 had been made. The following notation was made on the bills: "Credit by 1 bird cage, .90; credit by 1 tin pan, .25; credit by another tin pan, .15; credit by 1 hook, .05. Total \$1.35. Balance due, \$2.65."

## NEWEST GUNS SHOOT 12,000 FEET UPWARD

Aviators will do well to fly high and higher the better in the next war, if any comes, if they want to escape Uncle Sam's newest arm, a 50-calibre machine gun firing 500 shots a minute, with a horizontal range of 27,000 feet and a perpendicular range of from 9,000 to 12,000 feet.

At the 62d Coast Artillery anti-aircraft demonstrations at Fort Totten, N. J., it was shown the air is going to be untenable for bombing planes up to 10,000 feet, and dangerous up to 30,000 feet.

Five planes flew over from Mitchell Field at an altitude of more than 10,000 feet, yet, according to those in charge of the demonstration, they were marks for the newest gun.

Another gun demonstration at Fort Totten recently was a 3-inch weapon on a mobile mount, firing fifteen shots a minute, effective up to 21,000 feet, and with a 360-degree traverse, allowing the gunner to follow his target in any direction.

## 300,000 PHOTOGRAPHS PER MINUTE

Photographs at the rate of 300,000 a minute—thirty-one times as fast as those reeled off by the slow-motion picture camera—are being made at Shoeburyness under British Government auspices. The camera used in these lightning snapshots weighs two tons and is being used by ordnance experts to examine the behavior of shells and armor plate.

It has shown clearly, also, what happens to a golf ball when struck by a club-head. The ball is pressed flat on one side during the 1-1200th part of a second that the driver is in contact with its hard surface.

An exceedingly hard rubber ball, teed up and then shot at by a wooden plug projectile, acquired some curious shapes before returning quickly to the simple life of a stationary sphere. When the projectile hit it, the ball was pressed into the shape of a half moon. Flying through the air, it expanded in the direction of flight until it looked like an egg. Striking a steel plate, it expanded in the opposite direction until it had the appearance of a coin stuck on a wall. Then it rebounded and became again a sphere.

## CROWS ARE STILL ALIVE

Abe Roe and three other Weir men, who recently became enthusiastic members of an organization for the protection of wild life, plan to use reverse dynamite the next time they arrange for wholesale slaughter of the despised crow. Cherokee County pays a bounty of 3 cents for every crow head. Near Weir there is a grove which is used as a rookery for crows. It is said that millions of crows obtain their lodging there nightly.

Inspired by the idea of their organization, Roe, a grocer in private life, and his three associates, decided to kill the entire flock of crows in one great massacre. All day last Sunday they worked "mining" the grove with sticks of dynamite. The sticks were tied on to tree limbs to the number of eighty-seven. Electric wires were run in a wonderful maze and a battery was put in position. After darkness had arrived the four returned to the edge of the grove to touch off the dynamite. The crows were making much noise. The switch was thrown. There was a tremendous explosion.

Bright and early the next morning Roe and his associates trucked out to the grove prepared to gather up the dead and haul the heads to Columbus. Under the trees they found two dead crows.

Dynamite explodes downward. The crows in the tree limbs above were as safe as if they had been in Arkansas.

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# INTERESTING RADIO NEWS AND HINTS

## THE AUTO TRANSFORMER

An iron core transformer in which the entire winding serves as the primary, while taps taken off a portion of the same winding enable a certain portion to act as the secondary.

## THE RADIO IN YUKON

Radio dances have become one of the most popular forms of entertainment in the Yukon during the last winter, says "The Popular Science Monthly".

Residents of Dawson and many small settlements along the Yukon River have tripped the light fantastic to broadcast music played by the best orchestras in the United States.

## ROME RADIO STATION

With the installation of a wireless receiving set in the apartment of Pope Pius, and the establishment of a broadcasting station in Rome for Italian amateurs, the Vatican soon will be able to listen-in on programs from practically all centres in Europe.

The set in the Pope's apartment is not yet in full operation, but when it is his Holiness will be able to obtain recreation by listening to concerts and political speeches.

The broadcasting station opened in the Palazzo Alfieri is the first of its kind in Italy. It will broadcast concerts, news happenings and speeches.

## RECOGNIZED RADIO SINGER'S VOICE

The voice of his brother missing for five years was heard over the radio recently by William Martin, a farmer of Lakeville, near Rochester. As the result, Martin, who was unable to identify the broadcasting station, has started a search.

Martin, with a group of friends, was listening to a concert when he exclaimed that his brother was singing. He lost the station a few seconds later and effort to pick it up failed.

Martin said his brother, George, ran away from their home in Cattaraugus County five years ago when the father opposed his ambitions to study music.

## A MERCURY VARIABLE CONDENSER

There has appeared on the market a variable condenser which makes use of liquid mercury under pressure. The application of greater or less pressure causes the mercury to spread more or less over the mica dielectric and to produce greater or less capacity effect. The mercury is entirely enclosed, eliminating all possibility of dust and dirt, and, therefore, leakage and noises. It is claimed that this new condenser will stand more than 5000 volts, so that it can be used for low-power transmission as well as for receiving. Because of the simple construction, the price is quite moderate.

## THE SUPERDYNE RECEIVER

Like most of the recent advances in broadcast receivers, the principal feature of the superdyne is its special radio frequency amplifying circuit. Both the input and output circuits of the first tube are carefully tuned to the incoming wave, which is an arrangement that is bound to give remarkable results. The possibility of oscillations has been eliminated by the ingenious device of a reversed tickler coil. The tickler gives the tube negative regeneration, which discourages its tendency to oscillate instead of aiding it, as the usual tickler does. In tuning in on a station both the grid circuit and the plate circuit are tuned by variable condensers. If the set clicks and breaks into oscillation, it can be immediately stopped by a turn of the tickler or stabilizer dial. It may be necessary to turn the stabilizer at right angles to the grid circuit coil in order to pick up a station. As soon as the set starts to oscillate it should be tuned down immediately. Then, after both grid and plate circuits are tuned to resonance with the incoming signal the coupling between the stabilizer and the grid coil can be reduced until the volume of signal is as great as desired or until the set is just below the point of breaking into oscillation. Complicated as all this may sound, the set can be operated with but little practice. It will not only tune sharply, but it will bring in distant stations with ample volume.

## "ATTIC FACTORIES"

One phase of radio as to which there has been much speculation is what proportion of the more than 2,000,000 radio sets in use in the United States today are home-made, and what proportion are factory made. Manufacturers of parts sold to home builders contend that about 80 per cent. of the receipt from sales of radio apparatus by dealers have been from radio parts, and 20 per cent. from complete sets. The "complete set" business has taken a spurt lately.

The writer who, out of curiosity, had been looking up the matter of complete sets, as compared with parts, found in addition to the fact that the great majority of sets used today are home made, that a very large proportion of the complete sets are made, not in manufacturing plants, but by what might be called "attic manufacturers."

There are throughout the country several thousand so-called "radio engineers," who are making sets. One man connected with one of the large automotive houses has made 17 sets of the well-known reflex type. He was so successful in making his own first set and so enthusiastic about results he got with it that he actually wished on himself the job of making sets for his friends. If his friends had to pay for this man's labor it would have been nearly as expensive as to buy a set in the first place, but even then they would not have had the service which he supplied which each set he made. He is so interested in his friends' sets, as well as



his own, that he looks after any little difficulties which arise and keeps them in shape. As a matter of fact this man installed and set up the sets for nothing except the fun of the game.

A man connected with the advertising staff of a nationally known magazine made a set for himself and it worked. He made another for his father and it worked. Now he is making a couple more for people who have heard these. A man in Astoria, L. I., is making his seventh set. There are actually thousands of such cases.

Then there is another type of "attic manufacturer." For instance in Union Hill, N. J., a man who ran a garage found he could earn more money making up radio sets and selling them than he could with his garage. So he hired a manager to run the garage business and proceeded to make four or five sets a week for his friends.

It is no small part which "attic manufacturers" are playing in the development of the radio industry.

### ABOUT NEUTRODYNES

When building a neutrodyne set the angle at which the neutroformers are set is 54.7 degrees. To neutralize it tune in at as loud a signal as possible. Howls will undoubtedly accompany it, but they will be eliminated as the set is balanced. Then take the second radio frequency amplifier tube out of the socket and place a piece of paper over one of the filament tips on the base. If the set is equipped with a rheostat for each tube, then all that is necessary is to turn out the filament of the first tube. If the other method is used, replace the second radio frequency amplifier tube in the socket. Only the plate, grid and one filament tip will make contact in the socket, because the other filament tip is covered with paper. Then adjust the second neutrodon until the signal disappears or reaches minimum intensity. Fix the neutrodon permanently in the position. Then remove the paper from the filament tip and light the filament, placing the tube in operation. The first radio frequency tube is then removed from the socket and paper is placed on one filament tip and the tube replaced in the socket. Then adjust the first neutrodon until the signal is at minimum intensity. The first tube can then be put in operation and the set should function properly. If the set is correctly balanced no squeals or howls will be heard throughout the tuning range of the set.

### TRANSFORMER CONNECTIONS

There is a right and a wrong way of doing anything and this truth is perhaps more evident in radio than in any other art. A wrong diagram may be followed minutely, yet the set of one fan who followed the diagram will work like a charm while that on another fan will work poorly, if at all. The two sets may be connected in what seems to be exactly the same way, but the results obtained from one are entirely different from those obtained with the other. The secret to this paradox lies in certain little connections which, while they look the same, are really quite different.

Take the windings of an audio frequency transformer. In most cases the terminals of trans-

formers are marked P. G. B. and F. but in other cases only two letters appear for the four terminals. In such cases a letter P is placed between two terminals and the letter S is placed between the other two terminals.

The P refers to the terminals of the primary coil, while the letter S refers to the terminals of the secondary coils. In some other transformers besides the letter P and S two terminals are marked 1, while the others two terminals are marked 2.

Now there is a right and wrong way to connect these terminals into their respective circuits, and if they are not connected properly poor reception often accompanied by distortion will be the result.

If your transformers are marked P. B. G. and F, you cannot go wrong on making the connections. The P should be connected with the plate side and the B with the B battery side of the plate circuit of the preceding tube, while the G should be connected with the grid side and the F with the filament or C battery side of the grid circuit of the succeeding tube.

If, however, your transformer is marked P and S, you will have to see what is what before making your connections.

There are two leads from each coil of the transformer. One lead is from the beginning of the winding, this end being nearest the core. The other lead is from the end of the winding and is the end of the winding farthest from the core.

The primary winding and leads are marked P, while the secondary winding and leads are marked S. The beginning of the primary winding is marked 1 and B, while the end of the winding is marked 2 and P.

The beginning of the secondary winding is marked 7 and F, while the end of the secondary winding is marked 2 and G.

Now, regardless of what the terminals are marked, it is always a good idea to look at the coils of the transformer and see where the leads from the terminals originate. In practically all cases you will find that you will get the best results if the beginning of the primary winding (1,B) is connected with the B battery side of the circuit the end of the primary winding (2,P) is connected with the plate side of the circuit; the beginning, (1,F) of the secondary coil is connected with the filament or C battery side of the grid circuit and the end of the winding (2,G) is connected with the grid side of the grid circuit.

You must be especially careful of transformer connections when experimenting with reflex circuits, since in such cases the circuit will not work properly unless the transformers are properly connected. In such cases the principles outlined above do not always hold and the best connections are often found only by trial. The windings can be changed around and reversed until best results are obtained.

Care in such details and experimenting along these lines will often reveal the reasons why a receiver that should work like a charm does not and also explain why little changes which do not seem very important will often make the difference between good and poor results.



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NEW YORK, JUNE 6, 1924

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## ITEMS OF INTEREST

## CITY HIRES A RAT CATCHER

Rats are so numerous in Natchez, Miss., that the Woman's Advisory Board of the City Council has arranged to bring a professional rat catcher to rid it of the pests. All civic bodies and the merchants of the city will be asked to join in the campaign under his direction, and it will be carried out on an extensive scale. Thousands of dollars of property damage has been done by the rats.

## MERCURY INHABITED? MAY BE, SAYS EXPERT

The planet Mercury may be inhabited, according to Professor Bigouran, astronomer, who saw its passage between the sun and the earth.

"The heat and light on Mercury are seven times more intense than on the earth," he said, "but the atmosphere surrounding the planet is so compact that their effects may be less violent. Furthermore, Mercury, like the moon, always shows us the same side, and the existence of life upon it is highly possible."

## THE WORLD'S GOLD

Years ago when we first began discussing the financial problems we followed the tables of one Adolph Sotbeer, a Viennese statistician, who said there was \$6,000,000,000 in gold in the world; that all the gold that ever had been in the world is conserved and still in use; that \$4,000,000,000 is in coin and in circulation, and \$2,000,000,000 in ornaments.

The report of the United States Treasury for April 25 says that there was on that date in the Treasury \$3,706,038,318.55. This would imply, if there had been no increase, that we have pretty nearly all the gold in the world. Of course, there has been an increase since Sotbeer's estimates. The United States, South Africa, Australia, and other countries have been continuously pouring into the circulation of the world uncounted millions of dollars. All the same we have nearly all the circulating gold in the world.

## FLYING BOAT GOES 15,000 MILES WITHOUT OVERHAUL

The United States Navy flying boat PN-7 returned to Philadelphia May 7, after a 15,000-mile cruise with the fleet and over the old Spanish Main. Her two 650-horse-power Wright engines carried her over the entire cruise without repairs and without overhaul, which naval officers state is an unusual aeronautical record. She was piloted by Lieutenant A. P. Snody.

The PN-7 left Philadelphia early in January and joined the fleet in the maneuvers off Culebra. During that period she was the flying flagship of Vice Admiral Newton A. McCully and Rear Admiral Montgomery M. Taylor. After this duty with the fleet she went on a mapping expedition over the Windward and Leeward Islands. Lieutenant Snody also took the Governor General of the British West Indies on an inspection over the Dominion, covering what otherwise would have been a ten-day journey by boat in between three and four hours.

## LAUGHS

"Oh, John, dear, don't you hear?" said Mrs. Kidby. "How delightfully the baby crows!" "Crows? Humph!" said Kidby, "I'd crow myself if I were boss of the house."

At supper time. Husband (irritably)—Can't you remember where I said I left my glasses at breakfast this morning? Wife—I'm sorry, dear, I really can't. Husband (peevishly)—That just shows the forgetfulness of you women.

Pastor—It would surprise you to know how much counterfeit money we receive in the contribution boxes in the course of a year. Thoughtless Friend—I suppose so. How do you manage to work it all off?

Edward—Isn't Dick going off in his writing? Forrest—I hadn't noticed it. Edward—it seems to me he has lost that exquisite delicacy of touch he used to have. Forest (ruefully)—by Jove! You wouldn't think so if you had seen him work me for ten this morning.

A washerwoman applied for help to a gentleman, who gave her a note to the manager of a certain club. It read as follows: "Dear Mr. X—This woman wants washing." Very shortly the answer came back: "Dear Sir—I dare say she does, but I don't fancy the job."

Mr. Tightfist—And so you are the noble fellow who rescued my wife from in front of the electric car at the risk of your life? Take this shilling, my heroic man, as an expression of our undying regard. Mr. Raggs—All right, boss. You know better'n I do what the woman's worth!

A teacher in an elementary school had given lessons to an infants' class on the Ten Commandments. In order to test their memories she asked. "Can any little child give me a Commandment containing only four words?" A hand was raised immediately. "Well?" said the teacher. "Keep off the grass," was the unexpected reply.



## BRIEF BUT POINTED

## GERMAN HEADMAN A SUICIDE.

Executioner Schwiess, who had cut off the heads of 123 criminals, killed himself with a revolver, making the second public executioner to commit suicide in Breslau within three months. Schwiess was 74 years old and had retired on a small pension, having executed his last victim in Cologne late in 1923.

His pension was too small to support him and a few days ago he told friends that he would probably exhibit the ax with which he had ended 123 lives and deliver a lecture on his experiences to augment his income. He was apparently in good health and up to the last boasted that his method of killing prisoners was really an inadequate punishment for the crimes they had committed.

Executioner Spathe, who shot himself three months ago, was remorseful and died surrounded by forty-eight candles he had lighted for prisoners he had beheaded.

## JUNKMEN CAN'T BUY RAGS

The wave of economy which is spreading over the country is hard on the junkmen, Isadore Smith, head of a wholesale junk company, at Hutchinson, Kan., complained. "We used to ship out a car of rags once a week," he said. "Now we can hardly get them at all. People aren't selling rags any more. They're holding on to them and making things of them."

On the other hand this same wave of economy is sending a flood of old iron to the junk yards. The junk buyers say farmers are scouring their yards and sheds, gathering up all the old metal and selling it for junk, to realize every possible dollar. "The farmers need the money. Stuff that has accumulated for years on the farms is now coming to the junkpile," said the junk man.

During the past month one concern in Hutchinson has shipped out twenty-six cars of old iron.

## MENACE OF INSECT HORDES

Farmers in Derbyshire England, are troubled about the rapid decrease in the number of plover which at this season nest upon the moors. Today there are but dozens where a few years ago there were hundreds. They have good grounds for their fears.

While man fondly imagines himself lord of the world in which he lives he is actually nothing of the sort. The true masters of this planet are the insects, and while man can easily hold his own against the beasts he is helpless against the insects. Helpless, that is, without the help of the birds. Few have the faintest notion of the might of the insect world, which far exceeds in number of species, in voracity and in power of multiplication all other living things. More than 300,000 different sorts of insects have been classified and there are tens of thousands still to be described.

Were insects left to work their will and multiply unchecked it would be merely a matter of two or at the outside three years before all crops and all green things would be destroyed. The earth would be a desert.

Farmer and gardeners are constantly at war

with birds because some species eat considerable quantities of grain and fruit. It is, however, essential to remember the fact that the food of birds consists mainly of insects and that the bird is the one force which swings the balance of nature against the insect hordes.

## UNAFRAID PIONEER WOMEN

One of the pioneer women of what is now Finney County, Kan., was Mrs. McVey, whose husband had a stock ranch on Pawnee Creek. Soldiers who were moving some Indians from Dakota or Nebraska to Oklahoma camped on the creek not far from the McVey ranch. Mrs. McVey had a spring milk-house and made a great deal of butter. She was careful to keep her spring-house neat and clean. She had not heard of the Indians being camped near them.

About a dozen of those Indians showed up at her door and by making signs got her to understand that they wanted a drink. She little dreamed that they were Indians, but thought they were a bunch of Mexicans who could not speak English, so got them a cup and pointed to the spring-house. One can easily guess what a dozen wild Indians would do to a woman's milk and butter in a spring-house. She soon surmised that everything was not going on all right and went down to the spring-house. She grabbed a club and made those Indians vamoose in a hurry.

While she was yet cleaning up the place a soldier rode up and asked her if she had seen any Indians. This gave her a fright, because she had heard how the Indians would massacre and scalp. Imagine her astonishment when she heard that the men whom she had scattered with a club were themselves wild Indians.

## CHINESE FIRST TO USE NEEDLE MADE OF STEEL

The American spooled thread industry is founded on experiments made by the wife of Samuel Slater, who in 1793 introduced Arkwright's spinning or cotton gin at Pawtucket, R. I. Mrs. Slater twisted cotton yarns in an ordinary spinning wheel and made a two-ply thread. This industry still has to go back to Egypt, the mother country of linen, for the sewing cotton used in every American home.

It is made almost exclusively of imported long staple Egyptian cotton. The larger and coarser sizes, for crocheting and industrial purposes, are made of domestic cotton. The first material used by women for binding was made from the long roots of plants or leather thongs, says the *Detroit News*.

Woman's earliest needle was like an awl and was not pierced at the head. The earliest needles were made of bone, stone or bronze. In the Stone Age needles began to have eyes, this kind being found in the reindeer caves of France. China was the first to use needles of steel. This instrument, traveling westward, reached Europe through the Moors. At Nuremberg, Germany, in 1370, the needle industry was founded, and prospered later in England under Queen Elizabeth.



## ITEMS OF INTEREST

## WOODPECKERS HOLD UP TRAIN

Mayor Henry Weibrecht of Strong City, who is an engineer for the Santa Fe on a passenger train on the Superior branch, says his train was held up recently between Superior and Strong City as the result of a pair of home loving woodpeckers. The woodpeckers had built their nest in a telegraph pole along the Santa Fe's right of way and a spark from a passing train entered the hole in the pole and set fire to the birds' nest. The pole was burned and fell across the tracks, carrying the wires with it. The passenger train was flagged by a signal man and held up while trainmen removed the wires and fallen pole from the tracks.

## PREHISTORIC ANIMAL FOUND IN PERFECT PRESERVATION

A few years ago a party of Russian explorers dug into an ice bank on the Beresovka River, in Siberia, and there unearthed the remains of an extinct animal in a remarkable state of preservation, says the *Detroit News*. The skin was so perfect that it was easily removed. Some of the hair measured 30 inches. The stubby tail was intact. Analysis of the stomach contents showed grass and flowers of the same types that grow in Northeastern Siberia to-day. Scientists say the beast died in August because they found in its stomach several partly masticated flowers that bloom only at that time.

## ANCIENT SWINDLING GAME STILL FINDS VICTIMS

Ignoring his plea that he was the deceived, not the deceiver, a jury before County Judge Humphrey in Queens, N. Y., found John Kucharik of 1406 Avenue A, Manhattan, guilty of grand larceny. Kucharik was charged by Frank Kamarik of Manhasset with having worked a well-worn but seemingly still reliable swindling game upon him, with the resultant loss of his savings of eleven years, nearly \$1,500.

According to Kamarik's story, Kucharik introduced him to another man, George Smoll, and the three went to Great Neck on the theory that Smoll might buy Kamarik's house there. They met another man, who invited them to act as trustee in the repayment of \$100,000 worth of debts his father had left in the vicinity before he went to the gold fields and became wealthy. They were, of course, to deposit sums wrapped in handkerchiefs in the box containing the \$100,000. Smoll and Kamarik did so.

When Kamarik broke open the box a few days later it contained, of course, only newspapers.

## PLANT THAT EATS ANIMALS

Two American botanists tell of an "animal-eating" plant which they discovered in the depths of a great swamp 40 miles from New Orleans. They say that the plant devours animals and

suggests that it is a "missing link" between the plant and animal kingdom. The stems consist of "flesh" around a "bone" covered by wrinkled skin. They say that the muscular force of its ghastly fronds and long creepers is enormous. The scientists report they saw several small animals such as squirrels and rabbits caught by the plant. When the animals were captured the life was squeezed out of them and they were lifted by the fronds to a big opening toward the top of the main stem which serves as the stomach of the plant, says the *Detroit News*.

Carnivorous, or, as they are sometimes called, "insect-eating" plants are by no means rare. They exist by the consumption of insects and small animals and specimens such as the "pitcher plant" "eat" flies. Such plants are found all over the tropics, always in bogs and marshes.

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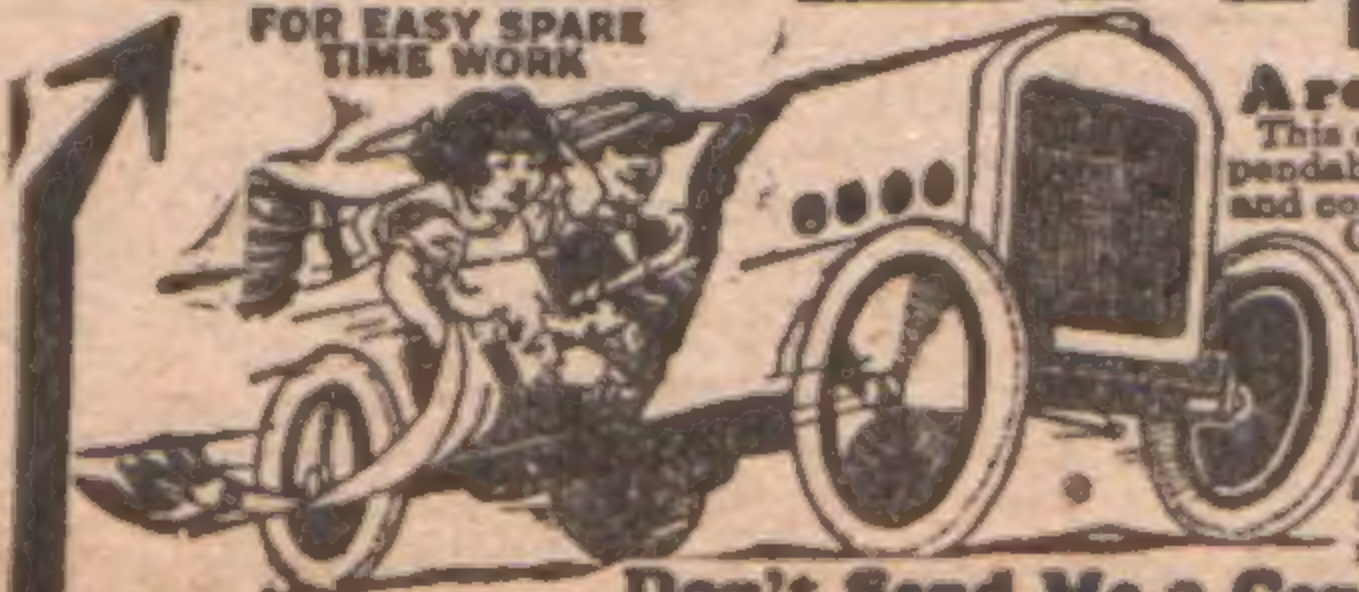
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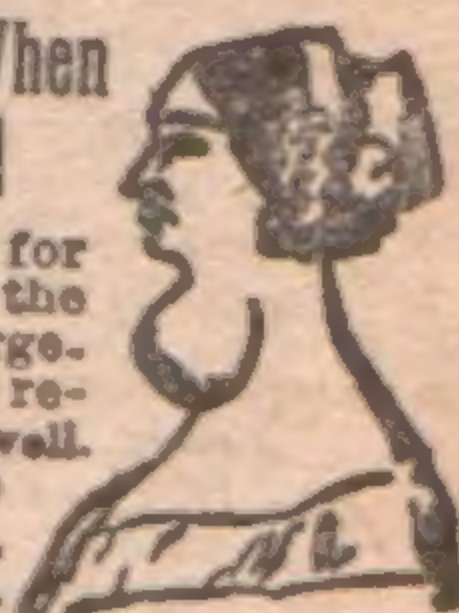
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